

Elisha Wyman  
Dragonfly Academy  
LD 210

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

As employers in the field of direct care and support, we are deeply concerned about the proposed two-year suspension of cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for MaineCare rates in the biennial budget.

We have employed between 5-12 direct care staff over the past decade. This has been an intense struggle for us - keeping their wages at a livable rate has been our goal, and the COLA has been immensely important in achieving this.

Among our colleagues across the state, COLAs have been essential for helping retain staff by allowing modest but necessary wage increases. These adjustments also ensure that MaineCare labor rates meet the state's commitment to support wages at 125% of the minimum wage—a critical measure for maintaining a stable workforce.

This suspension will have devastating consequences for individuals with intellectual, developmental, and physical disabilities, those receiving behavioral health support, older adults, and the dedicated direct care workers who provide essential services. With rising costs of living and increasing minimum wage, our direct care workforce cannot afford to go an additional two years without wage adjustments. The subsequent loss of staff will mean a collapse of supports and services for those who need them most.

We urge you to Support the Direct Care Workforce and Protect Vital Services by restoring the COLA in the Biennial budget and rejecting Part UU language that impacts the MaineCare Rate Setting System.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Elisha Wyman & Kiersten Donahue  
Owners, Dragonfly Academy  
Early Childhood Intervention & Support