

LD709 Support Testimonial

My name is Kris Bandle. I live in Limerick, Maine. My wife Kim was diagnosed with Early Onset Alzheimer's in 2022. I applied for and received a Respite 4 ME grant in 2024. At the time, I was still working and caring for Kim. About a month after receiving the grant, I took a medical leave from work without pay to care for Kim full time. I left my job at age 55 after 28 years with the company in September of 2024. I had to begin drawing from my retirement to make ends meet. It was very stressful and a difficult choice to make having a mortgage and bills to pay.

The Respite 4 ME grant was a lifesaver for me. I was able to afford to put Kim into adult daycare at the Samuel Cohen center one day each week, hire someone to clean my house each week, and get a local CNA to come to my house for four hours each week to take care of Kim while I did errands and food shopping. I was also able to buy diapers, wipes, dry shampoo, and items to make my life easier such as a shower chair.

Since the grant ended, I've been struggling to keep up with everything. Being a full time caregiver is hard work. Kim is now fully incontinent. I do multiple loads of laundry daily, bathe and dress Kim, prepare meals, clean the house, handle finances, etc. I'm doing the work of several people without much of a break.

Legislators should support the LD709 bill because there are many of us in Maine struggling to care for our loved ones. Being a caregiver is exhausting. No one is prepared for this journey and a grant would provide some much needed relief.

Please also consider raising the financial eligibility threshold to realistic 2025 levels. I have been saving for Memory Care which will be around \$11,000+ per month for possibly several years. I shouldn't be penalized for having these assets.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kris Bandle