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Testimony of Diane Dickerson, CEO, Bangor Region YMCA  
before the Committee on Health and Human Services  
in support of

**LD 561: An Act to Ensure Subsidy Reimbursements for Certain Child Care Providers**  
March 14, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Diane Dickerson and I am the proud CEO of the Bangor Region YMCA, where we serve the region that includes more than 25 towns and 10 School Districts. We have a robust Child Development Program and accept children on the Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP) as well as provide additional financial assistance we privately raise to ensure all our families are well-served and have the opportunity for early childhood education and before and afterschool enrichment programming. I strongly support LD 561: *An Act to Ensure Subsidy Reimbursements for Certain Child Care Providers*.

Collectively, the 15 YMCAs in Maine are the largest childcare provider in the state. We serve thousands of children in our early childhood education programs, before/afterschool programs, and summer camp. These programs provide children with safe, nurturing and enriching care, and are a critical component of our state's infrastructure to support working parents and our economy.

The current attendance-based reimbursement payment practice for children on CCAP is a financial and administrative burden for providers. This payment practice causes significant hardship for those providers that participate, and disincentivizes others from accepting children on subsidy. Providers have no way of knowing, or control over, the children's attendance, and therefore cannot predict their payments. Further, the fixed costs of care – including staffing and keeping the building open – do not decrease if those children are absent, yet our payments from the State do decrease. Frankly, providers are left subsidizing the subsidy program, and this is simply not sustainable or fair.

The shift from attendance-based to enrollment-based reimbursement for CCAP is a critical step in making this important program work for families and providers. Enrollment-based reimbursement is a more stable and sustainable funding mechanism for providers, and better aligns with the payment practices of our private-pay families. This bill can help ensure that the Bangor Region YMCA, the region's largest facility-based childcare program, remains able to accept children on subsidy, knowing that we will receive consistent payments. This can increase access to affordable, high-quality childcare for low-income families in the greater Bangor area, which is greatly needed. Our region has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest percent of high-quality childcare sites and the rate of child poverty (15.5%) exceeds the State of Maine rate (12.3%).

With more stable funding for our Early Childhood Education and our Before and After School Programs, the Bangor Region YMCA can invest in better facilities, hire better trained staff, and continue offering quality care for the children of our region. This will lead to improved academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for children.

On behalf of our children, families, staff and the community we serve, I respectfully ask for your support of LD 561: *An Act to Ensure Subsidy Reimbursements for Certain Child Care Providers*.

Respectfully submitted,

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