

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for your service. I am a resident of Franklin Maine and my brother is a resident of Lebanon, Maine. I am the recipient of a respite grant to help with the care for my brother; the grant has been so important for our situation.

My 80 year old brother is on the autism spectrum and additionally has some dementia. He has lived with my mother for many years, but unfortunately she passed away in late 2023. Although our mother provided for my brother to continue to live in the house after her passing, other family members were concerned that there would be no one to look after him to make sure he was safe and thriving alone. They wanted to move him out of the house and into a low income apartment or nursing home which was devastating to my brother. Being four hours away, I was not able to regularly check on my brother; however, the respite grant saved the day so to speak. The grant pays for a dependable caretaker to meet with my brother two times a week to check on him, transport him for groceries and appointments, cook him some healthy meals, and help him with housekeeping needs. The result is that my brother is happy, the family is satisfied that he is safe, and I can be assured that he is being looked after when I am not able to get down to visit with him. And at least for the time being it is avoiding the expense of a nursing home.

This grant has been so important for my family as I am sure it has been for many others across the state of Maine in similar circumstances. Please support LD 709 so that people like us can continue to be supported in maintaining quality of life for the elderly or disabled and avoid nursing homes as long as possible.

Respectfully

Patty Knapp