

**3/14/2025**  
**Public Hearing**  
**LD709- Respite for ME program**

**Name: Suzanne Murphy, sm4967@aol.com**  
**Residence: West Gardiner, ME**  
**Employer: State of Maine**

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Suzanne Murphy, I am a resident of West Gardiner, Maine. I am employed fulltime, a Wife, Mom, Grandmother and caregiver to a loving Mother with Dementia.

My Mom, who lives at home, is still physically capable, but her diminished judgement requires 24/7 oversight. Like many, her situation is without long term care or coverage for home help. There is little income left after paying for home care, medication and basic needs. We do our best to keep up with the increasing demands of this disease, but that often means the needs of the caregiver fall to the wayside.

Caregiving can be overwhelming, exhausting and isolating. The guilt of not being able to do more, is a feeling that presents every day. In a web search looking for assistance, I discovered the R4ME program. Upon approval, the grant provided immediate funds to purchase items that had been delayed due to income constraints. Through the program, funds were used to purchase a home security system and safety equipment. Door and window alarms and security cameras were installed to increase safety. Food containers, totes, medical storage and a label maker were purchased to organize and improve safety. A small piece of exercise equipment was bought for days when outdoor walking isn't safe. Eraser boards were purchased for visible reminders of daily needs. This grant also offered funds to retain paid help allowing time for self-care. A weekend from being a care provider and stepping away to recharge is critical for both mental health and successful caregiving.

Safety and a loving environment are of utmost importance for anyone with dementia as is a rested caregiver. The grant provided the means to assist with both. As a caregiver, this program provided invaluable assistance that I pray continues to receive the funding and support we so desperately need.

Sincerely,

*Suzanne Murphy*  
Suzanne Murphy

