



Testimony in Support of
LD814 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO AREA AGENCIES ON AGING FOR
COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES AND PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT OLDER ADULTS

March 28, 2025

Marpheen Chann
Portland, Maine
Khmer Maine
Cumberland and York Counties

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Marpheen Chann, and I am the Executive Director of Khmer Maine, a nonprofit serving Cambodian Americans and Southeast Asian families in Cumberland and York counties. Thank you for the work you do to represent Mainers across the state, and thank you to Representative Cloutier and the co-sponsors of LD814 for bringing this important legislation forward.

I write in strong support of LD814, otherwise known as the Older Mainers Act, because it is a vital investment in the health, independence, and dignity of our elders.

At Khmer Maine, we see firsthand how access to community-based services makes a real difference in the lives of older adults. Through our partnership with the Southern Maine Agency on Aging, we host monthly health and wellness classes specifically designed for Cambodian elders. These sessions connect them to critical resources—from Medicare education to nutritional support—helping them age in place with dignity and security.

The Older Mainers Act would expand and strengthen these kinds of services, which are essential for:

- **Promoting Independence:** By providing wraparound case management, this legislation will help older Mainers remain in their homes longer, delaying the need for institutional care—something that more than 80% of older adults want.

- **Reducing Social Isolation:** Maine is the most rural state in the country. Access to community programming is essential to combat loneliness and improve mental and emotional well-being for older adults.
- **Improving Financial Security:** By expanding Medicare counseling and application support, this legislation will help older Mainers access and afford the care they need, reducing financial strain.
- **Saving the State Money:** Preventative, community-based care is significantly less expensive than nursing home care. Investing in services now will save the state money in the long run by keeping people healthier and out of institutional settings.

For our Cambodian elders, these services are more than just practical—they are lifelines. Many in our community face language and cultural barriers when trying to navigate healthcare and support systems. Without culturally competent, community-based programs, they risk falling through the cracks. The Older Mainers Act ensures that elders from diverse backgrounds have access to the support they need to live with dignity.

Supporting LD814 is an investment in the health, stability, and resilience of Maine's aging population. It means older adults can remain in their homes if they choose, caregivers get the support they need, and our communities remain stronger and more connected.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD814 and help us continue providing these vital services.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to bettering the lives of older Mainers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marpheen Chann', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Marpheen Chann
Executive Director, Khmer Maine