

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Testimony of Avesta Housing
3/28/25

*In favor of LD 814 - An Act to Provide Funding to Area Agencies on Aging
for Community-based Services and Programs to Support Older Adults*

Dear Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Sara Olson, and I am the Vice President of Advancement for Avesta Housing, the largest nonprofit affordable housing provider in Maine with over 53 years of experience providing safe, affordable housing to older adults with low incomes. We provide housing and support services to nearly 2,000 older adults every day.

At Avesta Housing, we see firsthand the challenges that older Mainers face in maintaining stable housing and accessing essential services. Rising costs of food, fuel, and healthcare have made it increasingly difficult for many to meet their basic needs. **The services provided by Maine's Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are critical in ensuring that older adults can remain in their homes and communities safely and with dignity.** However, demand for these services far exceeds available resources.

The impacts of AAA services are well-documented. Studies show that programs like Meals on Wheels significantly reduce hospitalizations, emergency room visits, and nursing home placements. Avesta witnesses these successes in households of older adults throughout Maine every day. LD 814 will ensure these successes continue by helping thousands of Mainers age with dignity while maintaining their housing stability.

Avesta Housing urges the Legislature to support LD 814 and invest in the well-being, housing stability, and independence of older Mainers. Thank you for your time and commitment to this vital issue.