

LD 980 – Resolve, to Create the Commission to Improve the Oversight of the Long-term Care System

Testimony of John Brautigam, Esq. for Legal Services for Maine Elders Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

March 28, 2025

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

My name is John Brautigam, and this testimony is offered on behalf of Legal Services for Maine Elders. LSE provides free legal help for Mainers aged 60 and older when their basic human needs are at stake.

The long-term care industry plays a vital role in supporting Maine's aging population and individuals with disabilities. We owe a debt of gratitude to the individuals who work so hard in this sector caring for our loved ones.

Because of the significance of this role, it is important to be sure that this sector operates with the level of consistent oversight necessary to ensure safety, quality, and accountability. Families place tremendous trust in care providers—whether in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or home- and community-based settings. With the level of change and the strain on resources, it may be worth considering whether there are steps that could be taken to provide further assurances that our loved ones are receiving the responsiveness they deserve.

It is worth considering how a commission dedicated to studying oversight of the long-term care industry might lead to beneficial innovations. Such a commission could comprehensively examine systemic gaps, with particular focus on the staffing crisis straining the industry and threatening care quality across settings.

By bringing together voices from across the continuum of care—including direct care workers, consumers, family caregivers, providers, and regulators—this commission would

LEGAL SERVICES FOR MAINE ELDERS, INC.
5 Wabon Street, Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 621-0087 Fax (207) 621-0742
Offices in Augusta, Bangor, Lewiston, Biddeford and Presque Isle
LSE Helpline 1-800-750-5353 (Voice/TTY)

www.mainelse.org

March 28, 2025 Legal Services for Maine Elders – LD 980 Page 2

help chart a path toward stronger standards, improved enforcement, and more sustainable care models that center the dignity and well-being of those who depend on these essential services.

We are grateful for the businesses and individuals in this sector. They need our constant support and the resources their important work merits. We consider a new study commission to be a way to support them and consider what can be done to maximize the success of their efforts.

We are happy to continue to discuss this concept with Senator Tepler and the committee, and we thank the sponsor for presenting this idea.

Thank you.