



# MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936

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## **Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) In Opposition to**

*LD 1066, An Act Regarding Limits on Municipal General Assistance Programs*

April 7, 2025

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Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Amanda Campbell, and I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 1066 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC).

As proposed in LD 1066, unless it is used to fund temporary housing or emergency shelters and for certain hardships, General Assistance (GA) applicants are limited to three months of housing assistance and 30 days of aid for all other non-housing related living expenses during a 12-month period. Under the current law, provided applicants meet all eligibility requirements, there is no limit on the number of months in which aid can be provided. However, there is a limit on the value of the assistance provided, which is calculated according to the formula found in Title 22, §4305.

In addition, this bill increases the period of ineligibility from 120 to 180 days for applicants who have voluntarily left employment or been discharged for misconduct.

Finally, LD 1066 would require municipalities to utilize a currently optional municipal work program. This change from an allowance to a requirement may trigger the state mandate reimbursement requirement under the Maine Constitution, Article IX, Section 21, for 90% of municipal administrative costs. Currently, no administrative costs are reimbursed to municipal officials who administer this state mandated program. Very few municipalities utilize this statute as part of the local GA program due to management challenges and issues regarding workers' compensation regulations.

Municipal officials acknowledge that the GA program needs review and revision. Officials also recognize that this bill, like the language proposed in LD 209, seeks to return GA to its "historic program of last resort" status. Until a complete overhaul, that involves all relevant stakeholders occurs, the LPC will remain in opposition to bills like LD 1066.

Thank you for your consideration of the municipal perspective on this important topic. Please feel free to contact any member of the LPC or the MMA Advocacy team with any questions relating to municipal operations.