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April 14, 2025

Senator Henry Ingwersen, Chair
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 1367 – *Resolve, to Study Methods of Gradually Transitioning Individuals from Government Assistance Programs to the Workforce*

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide information in opposition to LD 1367, *Resolve, to Study Methods of Gradually Transitioning Individuals from Government Assistance Programs to the Workforce*.


This resolve directs the Department to study and evaluate methods of gradually transitioning recipients of assistance away from MaineCare and other government assistance programs. This bill proposes a report due to the Legislature by December 3, 2025. As written, the scope of the proposed evaluation refers to “government assistance programs”, which could include, along with the many programs offered by the Department, Social Security, housing assistance, Veteran’s Assistance, utility supports, WIC, and many more. Topics that affect the transition from assistance programs could include benefits cliffs, minimum wage and overall income analysis and other broad economic impacts on Mainers.

The proposed content of the report required in this bill is expansive and will require dedicated and expert resources beyond existing Department staff. In order to conduct the proposed study and evaluation and provide a report by December 2025, mere months past the end of the Legislative Session, the Department will require a dedicated resource which may require a lengthy procurement process to obtain and will also have an associated expense. In addition, with significant federal interest in potential actions related to work requirements that, if proposed, would likely be proposed during this same time frame, it is likely that significant revisions to any report may be required as more actions and information may emerge.

While there is significant state and federal interest in Medicaid work requirements, a joint focus on supportive structures to reduce the disincentives created by benefits cliffs may be an opportunity to create more balanced and comprehensive efforts to support Maine people in gaining and sustaining independence.

We wanted you to be aware of the above information as you consider this bill going forward. If you have any further questions during your deliberation of this bill, please feel free to contact us or the Department's Government Relations Director, Abby Stivers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ian Yaffe".

Ian Yaffe, Director
Office for Family Independence
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Probert".

Michelle Probert
Director
Office of MaineCare Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services