



**Kristen Cloutier**

33 Charles St.

Lewiston, ME 04240

Phone: (207) 807-1637

[Kristen.Cloutier@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Kristen.Cloutier@legislature.maine.gov)

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION

AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

(207) 287-1400

TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

May 2, 2025

*Testimony of Rep. Kristen Cloutier in support of*

## **LD 1677 An Act to Establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Prevention and Support Program**

*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services*

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and honorable members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Kristen Cloutier, and I represent House District 94, which includes part of my hometown of Lewiston. I am happy to provide testimony in support of **LD 1677 An Act to Establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Prevention and Support Program**.

Maine stands alone as the only state in New England without a permanent infrastructure for addressing Alzheimer's and other dementias. While our state has established public health programs in law for conditions like cancer, hypertension, and asthma, we lack a codified, strategic approach to Alzheimer's, despite its growing impact as a public health crisis.

LD 1677 would establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Prevention and Support Program. The program's objectives would include public education, supporting efforts for early detection and diagnosis, reducing cognitive decline and other negative outcomes and supporting care planning and management. In addition, the bill would enshrine the Healthy Brain Initiative Stakeholder Group in law by requiring them to oversee the development of a state plan on Alzheimer's which would be updated every five years.

The data speaks for itself: 30,000 people aged 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's Disease in Maine and 7.8% of people aged 45 and older have subjective cognitive decline.<sup>1</sup> Despite the growing need, services and support for affected Mainers remain limited. As the disease progresses, people with Alzheimer's typically require higher levels of care, yet Maine continues to see the closure of more and more skilled nursing facilities.

This shortage of professional care options means the burden increasingly falls to families. Approximately 66,000 family caregivers in Maine are providing unpaid care to loved ones with

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.alz.org/professionals/public-health/state-overview/maine>

Alzheimer's. A comprehensive public health approach is necessary to reduce this burden and enhance quality of life for both those living with cognitive impairment and their families.<sup>2</sup>

This issue is deeply personal for me. I was a family caregiver for my mom until she passed away in 2018 from Alzheimer's Disease. The Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Prevention and Support Program would be life-changing for so many individuals and families here in Maine. I often wonder how much more time we could have dedicated to being together as a family and how much less time we could have spent worrying about how to address all of the questions and the constant changes that my mother's disease presented to us, if we'd had access to additional support and resources.

I urge the committee to support LD 1677 to ensure Maine develops the infrastructure needed to address this growing challenge.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.alz.org/professionals/public-health/state-overview/maine>