

Testimony of Ruth Mattson, Resident of Clinton

Supporting: LD 1835 An Act to Improve Nonemergency MaineCare Transportation -
Sponsored by Senator Richard Bennett

May 8, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Ruth Mattson. I am a resident of Clinton. I support LD 1835 and appreciate Senator Bennett and the other cosponsors for bringing this legislation forward.

I am a MaineCare member who uses reimbursement services through Penquis CAP. This allows me the comfort of bringing myself to appointments or in the winter; when I have paralyzing anxiety of driving, I can get a relative to drive my car for me and still get assistance with gas.

I have not been a user of Modivcare, but I briefly worked for them, and also have heard experiences of others who've used Modivcare. The difference between how rides are scheduled and handled are very different.

When I would call Penquis to get a ride ID number for trips to medical professionals for me and others, the process is simple and easy. They simply ask to verify the home address, destination address, date and time of the appointment and then are able to give me the trip ID number. On the other hand, Modivcare requires to verify a client with the same information, along with what type of doctor or clinic it is, approximate length of appointments, and a few other questions before being able to provide clients with ID numbers.

Penquis has riders authorize others onto their account, which allows others to schedule or cancel rides on their behalf. Meanwhile, Modivcare does not require authorization for others to call on someone's behalf. By not having authorizations in the system, during my time at Modivcare, I had a caller who had just got out of jail and was calling to check on his scheduled ride to a drug clinic; and sadly he discovered that an ex partner had called and canceled the rides. There was not enough advance notice in which for them to reschedule the rides to assure that he would get to the clinic for his next appointment.

I have experienced, and heard from others how frustrating it is that, unlike local CAP agencies, Modivcare has an automated phone system which places you on hold until a representative is available and that representative might be in California taking down your information. Mainers understand each other's struggles and try to help find

solutions.

Through my experience with Modivcare and, separately, hearing the experience of others using Modivcare, having an independent ombudsman program would be very valuable to the community to know our complaints can be safely shared and know that it will be followed up with.

Thank you for listening to my perspective. Please vote Ought to Pass.

Respectfully,

Ruth Mattson