

Colleen Brown  
Whiting  
LD 2177

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Committee:

My name is Colleen Brown of Whiting, Maine. I am a Maine taxpayer, a special education administrator, and someone who works daily within systems that rely on MaineCare-funded services actually being available when people need them.

I am submitting testimony in support of LD 2177 because MaineCare reimbursement is one of the primary structural reasons we continue to experience service shortages, provider burnout, and delayed care across the state.

When reimbursement rates are outdated, inconsistent, or misaligned with actual service costs, the result is predictable. Providers limit participation or leave the system entirely. Services exist on paper but not in practice. Families and municipalities are left absorbing the consequences through emergency care, school systems, law enforcement, and local taxes.

Updating the reimbursement system is not about unchecked spending. It is about ensuring the dollars we already commit are structured in a way that sustains access, stabilizes the workforce, and prevents higher downstream costs. When providers cannot afford to serve MaineCare members, the state ultimately pays more through crisis responses and institutional care.

From my professional perspective, reimbursement failures are not theoretical. They directly affect whether children receive timely evaluations, whether adults can access community-based care, and whether rural areas can retain any providers at all. Maine cannot continue to rely on goodwill and overextension to prop up essential services.

That said, modernization must be paired with transparency and accountability. Any changes to reimbursement methodology should be data-informed, regularly reviewed, and tied to measurable outcomes related to access and provider participation. A system that is updated once and then ignored will simply recreate the same problems in a few years.

LD 2177 represents a necessary step toward aligning MaineCare reimbursement with reality. I urge the Committee to support this bill and ensure that improvements are implemented with both sustainability and fiscal responsibility in mind.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,  
Colleen Brown  
Whiting, Maine