

Scott Miller  
south portland  
LD 2177

My name is Scott Miller, Director of Creative Trails at Support Solutions. Our program employs 30 staff who support nearly 175 individuals across York and Cumberland Counties. With more than 25 years in this field, I have seen persistent challenges in retaining staff and offering wages that reflect the professional responsibilities of DSPs. It is essential that the State recognize DSPs as skilled professionals and ensure reimbursement rates that support competitive, sustainable wages.

Section 3 of LD 2177 threatens the stability of Maine's rate-setting system by making reimbursement adjustments contingent on available appropriations. This would allow the Department to reduce, delay, or eliminate scheduled rate adjustments, even after they have been studied and finalized, undermining the bipartisan commitment made in 2022 to transparent and predictable rate setting.

The current five-year rate-setting framework, tied to minimum-wage increases, was designed to promote transparency, predictability, and adequacy. Section 3 reverses these principles and reintroduces the uncertainty the reforms were intended to eliminate. Recent delays and omissions of COLAs, including the absence of a FY27 COLA proposal, further weaken system stability and strain already fragile services.

Providers cannot plan or maintain service quality under this uncertainty. Without reliable funding for wage adjustments, agencies cannot offer competitive DSP wages, retain staff in a tight labor market, or ensure continuity of care. A system that promises increases but does not fund them is not sustainable.

In summary, Section 3 risks undoing significant progress and returning MaineCare services to chronic instability.