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Testimony submitted on February 18th, 2026, to the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Finance Committee on Governor's Budget to Include Funding for Triple A Senior Agencies in Maine

Senator Margaret Rotundo (D-Lewiston), Representative Gattine , and Members of the Joint AFA Committee, my name is Ron Phillips. I'm a retired resident of Waldoboro. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Triple AAA agencies – Area Agencies on Aging - in Maine that serve the increasing senior population in Maine.

Their funding like many organizations, is challenged and in jeopardy in Maine and the nation. Yet they are the gatekeepers and “go to” agencies throughout Maine when it comes to help for caring for a loved one in the home or an institution.

I speak to you not just as a volunteer advocate for Maine AARP and national organizations such as USAging that support Triple A's and senior and other populations in need throughout Maine and the nation, but also as a family caregiver advocate. I cared for my spouse of 62 years 24/7 over a recent five-year period, coping with and learning a lot about homecare, and the invaluable work provided by providers under the auspices of Triple AAAs. This included med management, including morphine, household adaptation, hygiene and many other what's called ADLs – Activities of Dailing Living – with which many of you here today are familiar, or will become familiar, at some point given Maine's aging population, the largest in the nation.

The Triple AAAs are serving many households annually, a growing number. They're staffing and abilities is compromised not just by underfunding, but also, just how far

the compassion in their staff can go in long hours caring for a household. In my experience these caregivers – who also are far from earning a living wage - yet another issue that hopefully will be addressed in LD 1932 by raising the reimbursement rate to 140% of Maine’s minimum wage – are the mainstay of the infrastructure of Maine’s caregiving.

Triple AAA’s need to get their respective funding picture, righted. The AFA can contribute to this by restoring funding in the Governor’s supplemental budget. This will ensure the Triple AAAs maintain a modicum of staff abilities to provide household and institutional care of loved ones, including those with disabilities, Alzheimer’s, aging in place, and simply, aging in dignity.

Thank you.