



Consumer Council System of Maine
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

219 Capitol Street, Suite 7
Augusta, ME 04330

Phone: 207.430.8300

Fax: 207.430.8301

Toll-Free: 877.207.5073

www.maineccsm.org

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Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Simonne Maline. I am the Executive Director for the Consumer Council System of Maine (CCSM). I am here today on behalf of the CCSM to testify in support of **LD 587 “A resolve, to Automatically Increase a Residential Care or Nursing Facility Resident’s Personal Needs Allowance Under the MaineCare Program When the Consumer Price Index Increases”**

The Consumer Council System of Maine is a public instrumentality written into State Statute by the Maine Legislature to serve in an advisory capacity and to provide legislators with guidance and advice regarding the delivery of effective and appropriate adult mental health services from those served by them.

The reason we support this Resolve is because it would help many of our fellow peers who live in both residential care facilities (aka) group homes and nursing care facilities.

Currently individuals can keep \$70 in personal allowance each month. It has stayed at this same amount for decades. This very small allotment must cover all personal needs, which could include specific foods, vitamins, dietary supplements, clothing, and personal hygiene items. Also, some facilities do not offer personal internet and cable costs for residents. This does not give a resident much leeway to pay for things that they would like to do for recreation, or even be able give a birthday card to a family member etc.

Giving an increase is vital to an individual’s spending allowance It is so important for living a full life inside and outside these facilities. It should not fall to family and friends who might not have the resources to meet these basic needs for individuals. Autonomy is a very important need for any person. Let’s give people their dignity to pay their own way in their lives!

Sincerely,

Simonne M. Maline

Executive Director