

March 22,2023

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and Honorable Members of the Health and Human Services Committee.

My name is Kandie Cleaves, and I reside in Garland. I am here to testify in favor of, **LD 587 “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”**

Currently individuals living in residential care facilities are allowed to keep \$70. for personal expenses. Even when their benefits go up, that amount doesn't. While I was doing Validations for the Home and Community Based Settings (HCBS) I saw the impact of this. Different settings had different rules around what an individual was responsible for out of the “personal allowance”. While some had everything covered, including internet, activities etc., others didn't even cover foods if an individual wanted to try a special diet to lose weight, if it wasn't the same others in the home were eating. A friend even reached out to me for help when her group home refused to purchase the foods her doctor had told she needed to eat to be more heart healthy; They told her it was her responsibility. Ultimately what I saw was that most people only had \$20. to spend on things they desired verses what they needed.

Last week, to get ready for a new job, my husband got a haircut, a simple crew cut, it cost \$18. plus, a tip. We then went to Walmart, to buy him a pair of basic black, non-sneaker shoes, the cheapest pair was \$28. A pair of pants were \$22., a pack of razor blades \$9. Those are basic items that many need to purchase just for everyday use. Not including the other needed items, we purchased, the above already goes over the \$70 amount, and it wouldn't even allow extra to purchase a favorite coffee or soda with friends.

We can do better by them, and we need to. In closing I ask that you **vote "ought to pass "on LD 587**

Sincerely,

Kandie Cleaves

Garland