

Good afternoon. My name is Glenda Machado and I live in Portland, Maine.

Maine has been my home for more than four years. Many of my family members live here, and we like it here, because it is a quiet, beautiful and safe place to raise a family.

I currently work in the hospitality industry in Portland, ME, which I'm sure you know is a huge business now that Portland has reached all the top ten places to visit across the country. I work hard cleaning rooms, so that patrons can come and enjoy their visits to our tourist destinations.

I worked throughout the pandemic without breaks or sick pay or health insurance. And while I was proud to work to support my family and to contribute to our local economy, I kept wondering why we couldn't be afforded the same protections as other workers and residents of Maine.

When I am sick, I don't go to the doctor. Even if I am very sick. Sometimes, if I'm in grave condition, I will go. Even then, I rarely am able to obtain the prescriptions they give me, because I cannot afford the medication. Most of the time, I stay home and stick it out. It causes so much stress to think about the bills I might get, that I would rather suffer at home. I can't prioritize hospital bills over food and secure housing for my kids.

If I had access to Mainecare, I would be a better mother, worker and community member, because I'd be able to stop worrying about getting sick and how that might cause a financial crisis for my family. If I could access regular care, I'd be more healthy and be able to prevent illness. I could go to check-ups instead of only going to the emergency room when I feel like I can't take it anymore.

This is the same for people across my community. People delay care, sometimes until it's too late. We are making huge contributions to our communities, and all we want is to be afforded the same access to basic services as other residents of Maine.

Thank you for your time.