



The Maine Long-Term Care  
**OMBUDSMAN**  
Program

## **TESTIMONY**

### **In Support of**

### **LD 1575; An Act to Promote Quality and Innovation in Nursing and Residential Care Facilities**

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

May 1, 2023

### **Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is John Hennessey. I am an Associate at Moose Ridge Associates. I am here today to present testimony in support of this legislation on behalf of the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

The Ombudsman Program is a nonprofit agency that provides statewide advocacy for older and disabled residents of nursing homes, residential care, assisted living and for recipients of home care services. Additionally, the program serves patients in hospitals who experience barriers in accessing the long-term services and supports they need when they are ready for discharge.

We are very encouraged by this legislation that requires the Department of Health and Human Services to bring stakeholders together to plan innovation and quality initiatives in both nursing and residential care facilities to promote person-centered care, access, health, quality of life, autonomy and safety. The Department may also implement updated reimbursement rates to take effect January 1, 2025.

An Advisory Committee has been established with a broad base of expertise to implement this effort to consider the needs of older and disabled residents served in these settings. We are very pleased to serve on the Committee.

Maine's long-term care facilities have faced many challenges in recent years due to staffing shortages, the pandemic and the closure of both nursing facilities and residential care. It is critical that we prioritize initiatives that are focused on facility innovation to assure the highest possible quality of care and quality of life for residents. There is work to be done in reducing the use of antipsychotic medications, staff recruitment and retention as well as person centered care.

We look forward to the work of the Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.