



# Maine People's Alliance

Good morning Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation.

My name is Adam Zuckerman and I am the lobbyist for the Maine People's Alliance. Our 32,000 members are committed to creating a state of Maine where everyone has what they need, everyone contributes what they can, and no one is left behind.

That is why I am here to testify today in favor of Majority Leader Terry's LD 1544. This bill would fix a serious flaw in the existing child tax credit that excludes those who need it most.

Currently, many Mainers with low incomes pay into the system via payroll taxes, sales taxes, and property taxes, but are not eligible for the Child Tax Credit. That includes seniors on a fixed income who are caring for grandchildren or adult dependents. Making Maine's credit fully refundable – available to Mainers with low-incomes—and increasing it to \$350 would reduce child poverty in our state by 12.3%, moving 3,500 Maine kids out of poverty.

Economists say the expanded federal CTC has an estimated 1,000% return on investment per year, meaning that it generates \$10 for every dollar spent.<sup>1</sup> That's because unlike the existing Maine credit it reached those who need it most. When working-class Mainers have a little extra cash, they spend it on essentials like groceries and school clothes, boosting local economies. That makes a huge difference for Maine families.

Crucially, LD 1544 also includes adult dependents. It makes me think of my cousins Aaron and Jay Kaufman, both of whom were born with cerebral palsy. Their parents have spent their entire adult lives caring for them and working to afford care for them. Since I can remember, Aaron has had a passion for politics and for disability rights. Aaron lives at home, but with the support of his parents, he has followed his dream. In November he was elected to his first term in the Maryland state legislature.

His brother Jay was born with the more severe case of cerebral palsy. He had chronic serious medical issues and needed around-the-clock care. After years of waiting, a few years ago they

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<sup>1</sup> Garfinkel, Irwin, Laurel Sariscsany, Elizabeth Ananat, Sophie M. Collyer, Robert Paul Hartley, Buyi Wang, and Christopher Wimer. 2022. The benefits and costs of a U.S. child allowance. *Journal of Benefit-Cost Analysis*, 1-28.

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10.1017/bca.2022.15 <https://www.povertycenter.columbia.edu/news-internal/2021/child-allowance/cost-benefit-analysis>

were finally able to get him into a group home. Jay passed away a few months ago, at the young age of 39.

Their parents had the means to take care of them, but so many do not. I know that if Aaron served in this legislature, he would vote to expand the Child Tax Credit. I ask you to as well. Thank you.