

**Testimony in Support of LD 1964, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the  
Commission to Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program**

Lauren Jacobs  
Old Town, Maine  
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Dear Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing,

My name is Lauren Jacobs and I live in Old Town. I am here today in support of paid family and medical leave for Maine.

In this testimony I could go into details about the numerous ways paid family and medical leave has impacted my life. How, as a teenager, my dad took time off work to care for my mom as she faced treatment for cancer and then, months later, to be with her in her final days. Or how, as a newlywed and young adult, my husband had to go through surgery and chemotherapy and because he had just started a new job, he didn't have enough sick time earned. Or, I could tell you how my husband later had to take time off to care for me, as I recovered from a major surgery for an exceedingly rare condition.

I could go into details on all of these, and tell you more about how lucky we were to have paid time off (when we had it) even when we weren't lucky with the medical diagnoses. But, to be honest, the details don't matter. Because we have all, all of us, been in situations like these – either due to our own medical issues, or the medical issues of our loved ones, or both.

Having a paid family and medical leave program is something that is just, humane, and caring. But if those adjectives don't sway you, I urge you to consider the economic reality. These kinds of policies will keep Mainers in the workforce and contributing to the economy, and will help increase lifetime earnings and social security contributions. Paid family and medical leave improves health outcomes – especially in rural areas – which is, of course, good for people and the economy.

I hope the committee will support LD 1964 and also work to improve it. Please do not allow for exemptions that would negate the protections this program is meant to provide. Additionally, this needs to be funded. A PFML system is sustainable after providing for initial start-up costs.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Lauren Jacobs