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**LD 2125 An Act to Establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias  
Advisory Council Within the Department of Health and Human  
Services and to Require a State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease  
and Other Dementias**

**Testimony in Support  
January 24, 2024**

Northern Light Health  
Acadia Hospital  
A.R. Gould Hospital  
Blue Hill Hospital  
C.A. Dean Hospital  
Eastern Maine Medical Center  
Home Care & Hospice  
Inland Hospital  
Maine Coast Hospital  
Mayo Hospital  
Mercy Hospital  
Northern Light Health Foundation  
Northern Light Pharmacy  
Sebasticook Valley Hospital

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN. I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations speaking in support of this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with more than 10,000 employees statewide.

This bill represents a primary recommendation of the Maine CDC Report on addressing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, the report was published in 2023 and contains recommendations for a state plan through 2027.

The Maine's Alzheimer's disease and Related Dementia (ADRD) State Plan recognizes the value of older adults with dementia and the need for policies aimed at enhancing prevention through early detection and diagnosis, provider to patient communication and care planning, treatment, and appropriate supports for people with dementia and their care partners and family members. Dr. Clifford Singer, MD, at Northern Light Acadia Hospital, participated in the development of this plan. Dr. Singer is a geriatric psychiatrist and serves as Director of the Mood and Memory Clinic at Acadia Hospital, one of our state's primary resources for clinical care, education and research in dementia. The long-wait times to get into this clinic underscore the growing need for services like this and how important it is to meet the goals set out by the State Plan to improve access.

It is indeed clear to us at Northern Light Health that the demand for Alzheimer's care and supportive services exceeds statewide capacity. The Maine Alzheimer's Association reports that the number of people aged 65 and older with Alzheimer's will increase from 29,000 in 2020 to 35,000 in 2025. This represents a 20.7% increase in just 5 years. Effectively meeting the needs of the Alzheimer's patients and their families requires capacity building in our health care systems and clinics, increasing the number of geriatricians and medical professionals with expertise in Alzheimer's, training and

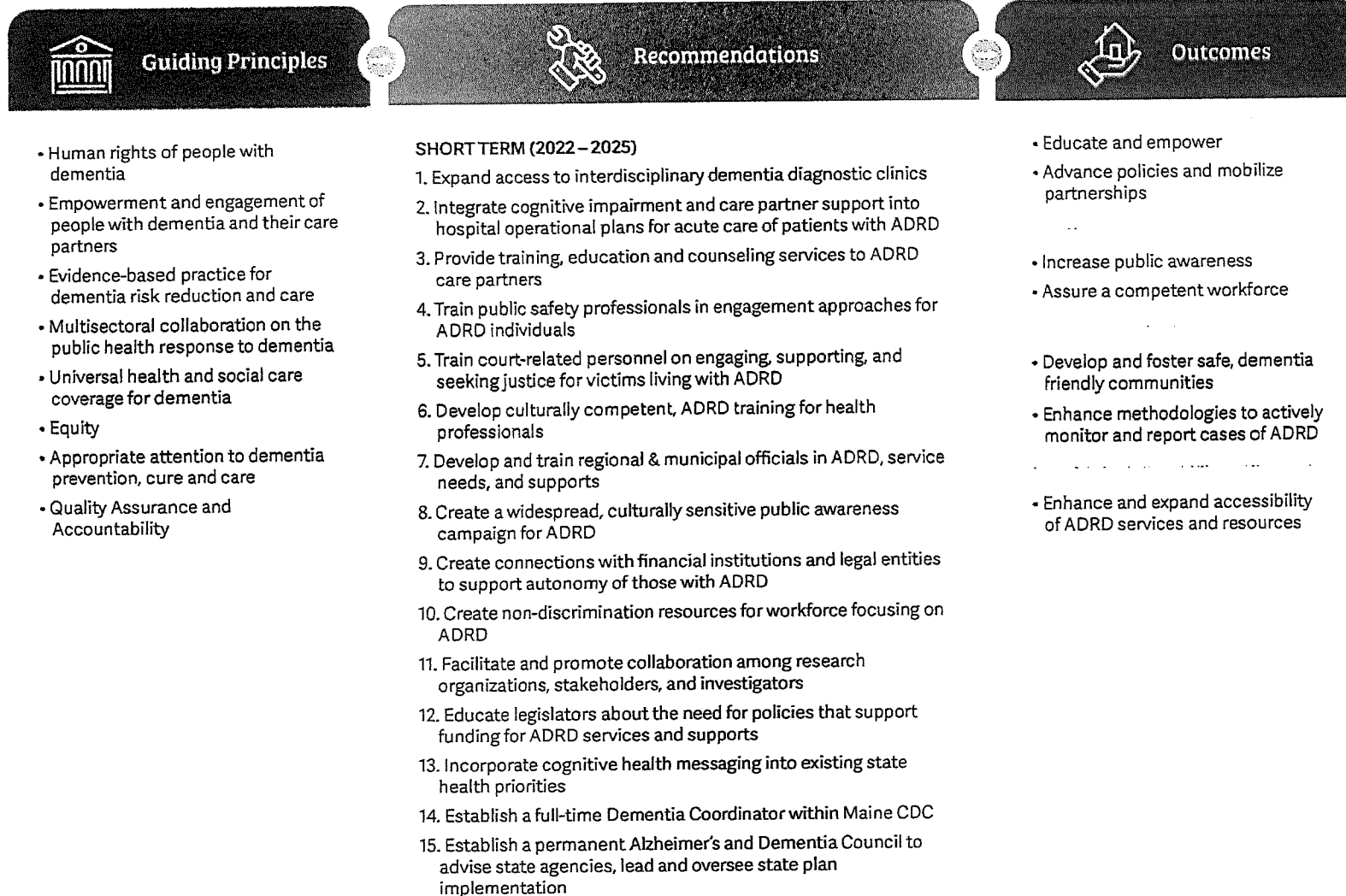
education in every Maine community, research and the need for strategic coordination of all of the short term and long term recommendations outlined in the report. I have attached the recommendations from the report to my testimony.

The bill before you today is the framework to meet a key short term recommendation – *Establish a permanent Alzheimer's and Dementia Council to advise state agencies, lead and oversee state plan implementation.*

We ask that you support this legislation to advance this critically important work.

Thank you.

## Short Term Recommendations



## Long Term Recommendations



### Guiding Principles

- Human rights of people with dementia
- Empowerment and engagement of people with dementia and their care partners
- Evidence-based practice for dementia risk reduction and care
- Multisectoral collaboration on the public health response to dementia
- Universal health and social care coverage for dementia
- Equity
- Appropriate attention to dementia prevention, cure and care
- Quality Assurance and Accountability



### Recommendations

#### LONG TERM (2025 – 2027)

1. Develop care navigator program, to include a “no wrong door” referral system
2. Expand funding streams for ADRD services
3. Integrate recreational programming into community-based programs
4. Promote regional public safety groups to discuss safety needs and support for individuals with ADRD and care partners
5. Expand domestic violence and sexual assault services for individuals with ADRD
6. Increase outreach and collaboration of Maine’s ADRD statewide network to primary and secondary venues
7. Create methodologies for actively monitoring and case reporting of ADRD



### Outcomes

- Educate and empower
- Advance policies and mobilize partnerships
- Increase public awareness
- Assure a competent workforce
- Develop and foster safe, dementia friendly communities
- Enhance methodologies to actively monitor and report cases of ADRD
- Enhance and expand accessibility of ADRD services and resources