

LD2211, An Act Regarding Quality of Care and the Board of Trustees at the Maine Veterans' Homes

February 27, 2024

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and other distinguished members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee; my name is Sharon Fusco and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Maine Veterans' Homes. It is a pleasure to be with you again today to testify on behalf of LD 2211, An Act Regarding Quality of Care and the Board of Trustees at the Maine Veterans' Homes.

MVH applauds the Speaker for her desire to bring added content into MVH's Annual Report. This bill will require MVH to share with this committee our Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) Plan and outcomes as well as outcomes from resident council meetings.

For those who are unaware of this framework, QAPI and resident councils are required by both state and federal regulation and designed to maintain and improve safety and quality in nursing homes. QAPI regulations involve creating an extensive framework, comparable to other internal control frameworks and includes:

1. Design and scope
2. Governance and leadership
3. Feedback, data systems, and monitoring
4. Performance improvement projects
5. Systematic analysis and systemic action

QAPI involves the entire organization – from board approval and oversight of the plan to execution at the home level. Every department is involved to make sure our care is exceptional.

This year our Annual Report to the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee contained a special section on Quality to give insight into the quality and performance improvement work that is ongoing within MVH and the results we have achieved.

I believe that the state veteran home program is a unique partnership between the State and Maine Veterans' Homes. As such, I am happy to make this reporting available on an annual basis and believe sharing this data with the committee will help the committee execute its oversight duties.

This bill also addresses the make-up and appointment process for MVH Board members. MVH is committed to diversifying the Board and strongly shares this belief with the Speaker. The military is a reflection of American society and MVH's Board should be equally reflective. We defer to the committee on how best to accomplish this goal but look forward to bringing different voices onboard.