



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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***Testimony of Representative Dan Shagoury introducing
LD 91, An Act to Authorize Employees of the Maine Association of Retirees to Be Eligible
for Participation in the State Employee Health Insurance Program
Before the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee***

Good afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. I am Representative Dan Shagoury, and I represent House District 55 - the communities of Hallowell, Manchester and West Gardiner. I come before you today to introduce LD 91, "An Act to Authorize Employees of the Maine Association of Retirees to Be Eligible for Participation in the State Employee Health Insurance Program."

The Maine Association of Retirees, Inc. (MAR) is a non-profit organization established in 1980 with over 11,000 members and has seven employees. It provides varied services to retired State employees, educators and local municipal employees.

Due to the ever-changing employment environment, MAR's Board of Directors suggested enhancing the benefit package to help the organization remain competitive in attracting and retaining qualified staff. To help accomplish this, I was asked to sponsor a bill that would allow MAR to add eligible employees to participate in the State Health Insurance Plan.

This looked to me to be a very reasonable request. Title 5, Chapter 13, Subchapter 2, Subsection 285 presently allows numerous ancillary groups to participate in the health plan, including employees of the unions that represent state employees, such as the Maine State Employees Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; licensed foster parents and employees of the Finance Authority of Maine. Including MAR employees seems a logical extension.

It is my understanding there should be no fiscal note associated with this bill, as MAR will be paying for the coverage.

I look forward to working with you on this bill, and I will be glad to try to answer any questions, however there will be someone from MAR speaking after me that can almost certainly answer them better. Thank you for your consideration.