

**LD 328, 467**

**March 5, 2025**

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder,  
Members of the Labor and Housing  
Committee.

My name is Harold Booth, I live in Hallowell,  
and I'm a retired state employee, retiring in  
1996.

I appeared before the 2023 version of this  
committee, presenting virtually the same  
testimony that I will present today. In 2023,  
this committee supporting this issue to the  
full legislature which passed it, putting it on  
the Appropriations table. There it  
languished, eventually getting held over to  
2024 when it again languished, and  
eventually died.

For the first half of my retirement, the State  
paid for my health insurance, as it was  
obligated to do, under the terms of my  
employment. However, when I reached 65,  
I became eligible for Medicare as a result of  
my spouse's Social Security qualification.  
When that happened, I had to move to  
Medicare and start paying the Medicare  
premium.

That meant that the state was no-longer  
paying the full freight for my health  
insurance, just providing supplementary  
coverage through Aetna.

I wanted to ascertain what the difference in  
the state's cost was between paying the  
'full freight' for a retiree's health insurance  
and the Aetna supplemental coverage that  
the state buys for Medicare-eligible  
retirees.

I have just visited the state web-site

<https://www.maine.gov/bhr/oeh/benefits/som-health-plan/premium-rates>

### Retirees Not on Medicare

Level of Coverage	Monthly Pension Deduction	Monthly State Contribution
Retiree Only	\$ 0	\$ 1,097.74
Retiree + Spouse/DP	\$ 1,148.00	\$ 1,148.00
Retiree + Spouse/DP 65 + Child(ren)	\$ 1,583.92	\$ 1,148.00
Retiree + Child(ren)	\$ 657.90	\$ 1,148.00
Surviving Spouse	\$ 1,097.74	\$ 0
Retiree on Medicare & Spouse under age 65	\$ 1,097.74	\$ 237.43

The full-freight coverage is just above  
\$1,097/month, while the Aetna  
supplemental is just above \$237/mo.,  
saving the state approximately \$861/mo. In  
the meantime, I now have to pay the  
Medicare premium [currently a bit above  
\$575/quarter], more than 10% of my  
pension.

When I started with the state, they paid for  
my health insurance, and when I vested,  
that obligation extended until the end of  
my life. Because of my spouse's  
qualification, I became eligible for  
Medicare, but I don't think that should  
relieve the state of its obligation to pay for  
my health insurance until I die.

Given that my being on Medicare saves the  
state a boatload of money, I think it's only  
fair that the state pick up the cost of my  
Medicare premium.

I urge this committee to pass these bills in  
effort to make good on the State's broken  
promise to retired state employees like me.

Thank you for your time.