

**A**

**166,000**  
family caregivers  
in Maine.

**155 million**  
hours of unpaid family care.

**\$18.81**  
economic value per hour.

**\$2.9**  
**billion**  
estimated  
economic value  
in Maine.



AARP Public Policy Institute | 2023 | [aarp.org/valuing](https://aarp.org/valuing)

Good Morning to the Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Loretta Burbank.

I live in North Berwick, Maine

I am here today to testify in favor of Legislatvie Document 709  
**An Act to Establish the Repite for ME Program**

I feel it is very important that this bill be supported. In 2023 the AARP Public Policy Institute published that in the State of Maine there were 161,000 family caregivers that represented 155 million hours of unpaid family care, with an estimated economic value was \$2.9 billion. Care givers need some supplemental support to be able to have Respite Care for their sakes and the sakes of their loved ones.

My husband passed away in September. I had been his caregiver, at home, for three years. He suffered from from dementia, congestive heart failure and other issues. He got progressively weaker and less able to do things without assistance. It was my honor to take care of him, however it was exhausting and difficult for me to be with him 24/7. I couldn't even leave him to do errands. We were not in a position to pay to have someone come in to relieve me.

The Respite for ME Care Grant during his last two years was a life saver for me..... I was able to have a caregiver come in and stay with my husband a few hours a week.

This enabled me to go to appointments, run errands, and to have some relief. It was comforting to know that he was being taken care of and that we weren't having to find the finances for it.

I hope that in the future this resource will be available for others, who so unselfishly take care of loved ones and need the lifeline that this represents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Loretta Burbank