

Maine's Agencies on Aging Support Communities

Maine's Agencies on Aging offer services and programs statewide that support older Mainers and Mainers living with disabilities to age in their homes and communities with dignity and independence. The Agencies on Aging are a core part of the fabric of supports for older Mainers, providing information, direct services, and resources to older adults (60+), adults with disabilities, and their care partners.



Wellness
Classes



Nutrition



Caregiver
Support



Supportive
Services

**Serving Maine's
residents and
communities for
over 50 years.**

Each year, Agencies on Aging provide critical services to support 53,000 older Mainers and Mainers living with disabilities stay in their homes and communities, including...

6,500 Mainers with home delivered meals and **6,000** with social dining sites

Health insurance counseling, information, and application support to over **5,500** Mainers

3,200 caregivers w/ information, respite and support

27,000 Mainers with supportive services, such as information & referrals to other services

AgeWise Maine

Association of Agencies on Aging

Maine's Agencies on Aging

Spectrum Generations

Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln,
Somerset, Sagadahoc, Waldo,
Brunswick & Harpswell

Aroostook Agency on Aging
Aroostook County

Eastern Area Agency on Aging
Hancock, Penobscot,
Piscataquis & Washington

Seniors Plus
Androscoggin,
Franklin & Oxford

Southern Maine Agency on Aging
York & Cumberland (excluding
Brunswick & Harpswell)

“It means survival. Meals on Wheels, it's survival. I'm grateful and pleased that there is an Agency that cares.”

—Meals on Wheels client, Brewer

“Respite 4 ME not only improved the quality of life for my mom and father but it also provided much needed respite for my wife and me.”

—Family Caregiver, Saco



207-764-3396
1-800-439-1789
aroostookaging.org



207-795-4010
1-800-427-1241
seniorsplus.org



207-396-6500
1-800-427-7411
smaaa.org



207-941-2865
1-800-432-7812
eaaa.org



207-622-9212
1-800-639-1553
spectrumgenerations.org



Testimony in Support of LD 814 - The Older Mainers Act

An Act to Provide Funding to Area Agencies on Aging for Community-Based Services and Programs to Support Older Adults

Good morning, Senator Ingwerson, Representative Meyer, and Esteemed Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

It's so good to see all of you this morning.

I am Megan Walton, and I serve as the Executive Director at Southern Maine Agency on Aging. I also serve as the Board President of AgeWise Maine - the Association of Agencies on Aging. AgeWise Maine is comprised of the five Agencies on Aging here in Maine - Aroostook Agency on Aging, Eastern Agency on Aging, SeniorsPlus, Southern Maine Agency on Aging, and Spectrum Generations. Together, we provide services for older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers in all 16 counties - and last year we served **53,000 individuals** across Maine. We have **1,403 active volunteers** and we work with over **259 local community partners** to ensure older adults get access to the services and benefits they need.

Thank you to each of you for your continued support at the State and local level for the Agencies on Aging and our vital programs and services. We thank you for visiting our locations, delivering meals to hundreds of older adults across the State, asking great questions about what we do, advocating for more support for family caregivers, and continuing to refer potential clients to our organizations that need help. We - collectively as Agencies on Aging - thank you for your tremendous leadership here in the state of Maine.

Today, we are asking for **your** help. With your support of LD 814, the Older Mainers Act, you can help Maine invest in a future in which *thousands more* older adults and family caregivers can receive vital programs and services here in our State.



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Vision behind Older Mainers Act

Today, I—and many others—clients, volunteers, Advisory Council members, fellow directors, local advocates, and representatives from many community based organizations -- are here today to testify in strong support of LD814, the Older Mainers Act.

The Older Mainers Act is centered on all of the things that make Maine such a great place to live. What I love about Maine might be what you also love about Maine... Maine is known for its outdoor beauty and landscape, its charming small towns, lobster and blueberries in the summer time... and of course... Maine's **people**. It is the people and relationships and sense of community that make Maine such a great place to live.

And the vision behind the Older Mainers Act is that we believe that Maine can be the best place in the country to grow old. Imagine that – not only Vacationland, and come for a visit, stay a lifetime... but Maine - the sought-after location in the US to spend your 70s, 80s, and 90s. Maine becoming a magnet and a place where individuals will be offered, and receive, the same things that we **all** want to receive as we age and as our families and neighborhoods and needs change -

- A family doctor I know and trust
- A hot meal in the winter and an air conditioner in the summer
- Friends or family members nearby and– if they're not nearby – a way to call and telephone and Zoom or Facetime them
- A person to talk to when I feel lonely
- A town and a community that is built for me and with me
- A ride when I need it most

This is the vision behind the Older Mainer's Act.



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Explain the context for this level of investment & the growing demand for services.

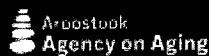
We are appreciative of the Governor's Office for continuing to recognize the services and the "focal point" mission behind the Agencies on Aging. The State of Maine continues to invest more funds into our core programs and services. Last year, Agencies on Aging received \$4.89M from the State of Maine to deliver services. I'd say that's a pretty incredible bang for your buck in our system – we put these dollars to work and collectively the Agencies on Aging served over 53,000 people across the State.

With the bill in front of you today – the Agencies on Aging are asking for increased support to meet the growing demand for our services at the local and regional level. Demand has grown, is growing, and will continue to grow.

Highlight exactly what the AAAs have been able to do and what we will be able to do with this additional funding.

The Older Mainers Act will continue to provide essential services for older adults and family caregivers here in the State of Maine.

- **AAA Services Promote Independence:** By providing hands-on, wraparound case management services, the Older Mainers Act will help older Mainers stay in their homes longer, delaying the need for institutional care and allowing them to age in place, as more than 85% of older adults wish to do.
- **The AAAs Can Eliminate Waitlists for Meals on Wheels:** A 5 year study from Brown University shows that Meals on Wheels reduced hospitalization rates by 31%, emergency room visits by 28%, and nursing home placements by 28%. This is a life-saving and money-saving service, yet currently over 600 older Mainers are on waiting lists for these services. The Older



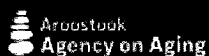
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Mainers Act would allow for more than 335,000 additional meals to be provided across the state annually.

- **Helps Put More Money Into the Pockets of Older Mainers:** Today, 52% of single older Mainers cannot meet their basic needs. Through enhanced Medicare education, counseling, and benefits application support, the Older Mainers Act will save Mainers money, allowing them to stay in their homes and reinvest in the economy.
- **Supports Caregivers:** Through direct programming and support groups, the Older Mainers Act would provide resources to help family caregivers balance work, personal health, and their caregiving duties. Each year, more Mainers become caregivers for their parents, children, and grandchildren. AARP estimates that 61% of family caregivers also hold down a job, so this support is critical to keep them in the workforce.
- **Your investment now will prevent the need for higher cost of care down the road:** Investing in the Older Mainers Act now will save the state money now and for years to come. The preventative programming the Agencies on Aging provide is proven to delay and keep people out of long term care facilities, which cost significantly less than nursing home care.
- **Builds Community and Reduces Social Isolation:** Maine's Area Agencies on Aging provide socialization and community building for their members, clients, volunteers, and partners. As the most rural state in the country, such services are essential to the health and wellbeing of older Mainers.

Supporting the Older Mainers Act is an investment in the health and resiliency of our communities. It ensures that thousands more older Mainers will receive access to essential benefits, community, and services, can stay in their home if they choose, and that caregivers receive the support they need.



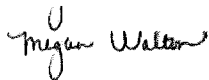
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I urge you to support the Older Mainers Act and help us continue to provide these vital services to our older residents. Doing so will improve the lives of older adults in Maine for generations to come.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to bettering the lives of Mainers. Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your attention, care and consideration today.

Sincerely,



Megan Walton

CEO, Southern Maine Agency on Aging

Board President, AgeWise Maine - Association of Agencies on Aging

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