

## Testimony in Support of LD 943

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Good afternoon, Representative Meyer, Senator Ingwersen, and members of the committee,

I am here today to express my strong support for LD 943. I live in Cumberland County, am a single mom of two, and have had to use Fedcap services to get the TANF resources I was eligible for. I am also a former Fedcap employee. I have seen firsthand how Fedcap's mismanagement harms both staff and participants.

Fedcap is poorly run, with staff who are improperly trained, inadequately supervised, and left without the support they need to assist participants effectively. This leads to constant staff turnover, creating instability for individuals who are already facing significant challenges. I have personally experienced this instability, having been assigned multiple Fedcap case workers. J. Collins ( manager), D. Hu, P. Tran, and Amanda M., forced to start over repeatedly. Critical services that should have helped me achieve self-sufficiency were either delayed or never provided at all.

As someone striving to support my family, I have endured unnecessary hardships due to Fedcap's failures. My internet was disconnected, leaving me unable to complete essential tasks. I was unable to obtain the glasses I needed, was evicted from my home, and had a flat tire for three months while waiting for help—causing me to miss job interviews. I bounced checks while trying to start my college classes because, after ten weeks of requesting support, my assistance was never processed. To this day, I still have not received the aid I was promised.

In January of this year, after being assigned my fourth representative and feeling completely unheard despite my repeated efforts, I took matters into my own hands. I emailed every single person in an administrative, supervisory, or directorial role at Fedcap, including the director, Grant Collins, who responded to my cry for help. The result? Yet another representative—one who takes up to three weeks to respond to a simple email. I was told my supports had been requested and were ready, so I used my limited funds on word that I would be covered. That reimbursement never came. I had spent money meant for rent on other necessities, believing Fedcap would follow through. Instead, I was evicted.

Many participants face simple but devastating barriers—lacking transportation to an interview, internet access to search for jobs, or even proper footwear to walk to a bus stop in the winter. These are fundamental needs that should be addressed, yet Fedcap repeatedly fails to provide solutions.

During my time working at Fedcap, I also found the environment highly unsupportive. When I had questions about how to assist participants, I had to seek guidance from a DHHS liaison because no one at Fedcap could provide a clear answer. This lack of structure, accountability, and transparency leaves both staff and participants in limbo, making it even harder for people to gain employment and independence.

LD 943 is essential to ensuring that participants receive the support they need and that organizations like Fedcap are held accountable. This bill to bring the TANF program back into DHHS where there would be more accountability to the people of Maine. Fedcap has proven it will not follow through on its promises and it's time for Maine to step back in to administer this program properly. I urge you to support this bill and advocate for meaningful change.

Thank you for your time and consideration.