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Testimony of Rep. Christina Mitchell introducing
**LD 1237, An Act to Support Adult Family Care Homes and Residential Care
Facilities That Are Small or Located in Rural and Isolated Areas of the State**
Before the Health and Human Services Committee

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee. I am Christina Mitchell, and I represent the communities of Cumberland, Long Island and Chebeague Island. I am here today to introduce **LD 1237, An Act to Support Adult Family Care Homes and Residential Care Facilities That Are Small or Located in Rural and Isolated Areas of the State**.

I imagine many of us in this room have experienced what comes with aging family members and have needed to seek additional help, often in a care facility or home. I myself have frequented many different care facilities for ailing family members and have learned first-hand how important these small facilities and their dedicated staff are for the families who utilize them and to the tightknit communities they are located in.

I stand before you today to offer a bill that will help smaller, more isolated care facilities survive and thrive.

The bill requires the Department to determine the likely impact of proposed rule changes to reimbursement and staffing requirements to long-term care facilities on small, rural, isolated and island facilities to reduce impacts on the communities where those facilities are located, as well as the impact on safety and quality of services. This bill also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a supplemental payment of 10% to the MaineCare rates for adult family care homes and residential care facilities that have fewer than 10 beds or are at least 35 miles away from the nearest similar facility.

Many of you know that I live in Cumberland, but, as I said when I began my testimony, I also represent Long Island and Chebeague Island. These are unbridged islands that rely on a ferry to get to the mainland. LD 1237 comes out of conversations and concerns on Chebeague Island, which is where Island Commons, a small, 10-bed senior care facility, is located. This committee is well aware of the challenges such facilities are facing in rural and isolated communities across Maine. It is my hope that with your support of LD 1237, we can provide a sense of stability for our aging neighbors.

Thank you for your time and consideration.