



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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April 11, 2025

Testimony
In Support of

LD 1243 – An Act Regarding the Licensing of Assisted Living Facilities

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Health and Human Services Committee. I am Representative Tiffany Strout from Harrington, representing the towns of Milbridge, Harrington, Columbia, Columbia Falls, Centerville, Addison, Jonesport, Beals, Jonesboro, Roque Bluffs, Whitneyville and Machias in beautiful Washington County and I am here today to present my bill – **LD 1243 An Act Regarding the Licensing of Assisted Living Facilities.**

I am presenting this bill today on behalf of one of my constituents. I have known this constituent and his family for many years and when he approached me with his situation, I began thinking how I could help.

Growing up in rural Maine is really a special opportunity. You get to know your neighbors, town citizens and surrounding communities. You grow up with generations of your family surrounding you and those who move away for some time usually wish to return home. Life is simple and people are very independent and proud and asking for help is a last resort because you always feel you should be helping others.

My constituent owns an Adult Family Care Home in Harrington, Maine. With a waiting list for openings of a room in the 6-room facility, he saw the need for more quality care for aging adults and decided to invest in opening a new facility to provide opportunities for families to get assistance with their loved ones. While he was working on the construction of the facility, starting in 2021, unbeknownst to him, a law went into effect in October of 2023 that would not allow him to open the newly built facility he was working on. He only became aware of this after all inspections were completed and he applied for his license and was denied in April of 2024.

In May 2024 I received the news that another nursing home in my area was closing. Narraguagus Bay Health Care Facility was in the heart of Milbridge and was caring for about 40 residents. This nursing facility was a big part of the community, and the residents were always out for parades and town functions and the students from the local elementary school would visit with residents for holidays and most importantly some were able to be close to their homes where family and friends could visit.

District 11 Addison, Beals, Columbia, Columbia Falls, Harrington, Jonesboro, Jonesport, Machias, Milbridge, Roque Bluffs, Whitneyville, Centerville Township, and North Washington (Part)


With this news and knowing about a brand-new facility waiting to open that would be able to keep 6 people close to home and receive great care, this bill seemed very important to put forth for consideration. The intent of this bill is not to go against the needs the Department of Health and Human Services saw when putting forth LD 475, it instead would open up an opportunity for someone who had good intentions and a proven history of great care of individuals to be able to offer their services to 6 more families in need of having someone assist them with their loved one.

People do not want to think of their loved ones as a burden and in DownEast fashion individuals do not want to seem like a burden to anyone, but unfortunately, sometimes both of these things are true. The family needs assistance as they may not be trained to provide the needed care or they themselves need to work to maintain all the other needs of everyday life. When you have to make the tough decision to move your loved one away from their home, sometimes the only home they have ever known, having an opportunity to keep them close to home and receive the good care they need is the best thing you could hope for.

We all know the opportunities across the State of Maine for caring for our elderly or those who need special care are very limited. This is especially challenging in rural Maine where we are a 45% receiver of MaineCare. By allowing those who already started construction of a new facility at the same location of their current facility with the intention of licensing at the same level as their current facility the opportunity to open the fully constructed and inspection passed facility would be a wonderful gift. As a part of the licensing review there would have to be no major violations associated with the license related to the already existing and operating facility.

Thank you for your time today and I would be glad to answer any questions and my constituent is here today to further describe his situation and answer any questions you may have about the facility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tiffany Strout".

Tiffany Strout
State Representative