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**Testimony in Support of LD 1683 An Act Regarding Disability Retirement Benefits under the Maine Public Employees Retirement System.**

Good afternoon, Sen. Tipping, Rep. Roeder and to all the members of the Labor Committee. My name is Doug Moore. I live in Sabattus and I am speaking in support of all affected by this bill today.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify in Support of LD 1638 retroactively repealing the MainePERS Social Security disability offset. Enacting the offset law in 1991 allowed MainePERS to pay a subset of disabled public employees less than the defined benefit they purchased due to social security income.

Those who benefit from the passage of LD 1638 paid into two systems with the understanding that they would receive benefits from each should they become disabled. These working-class Mainers continued to have both social security and MainePERS contributions deducted from their paychecks at the same rate, without an actuarial assumption accounting for the offset law.

A fair application of the 1991 offset law by the actuary and MainePERS would have reduced the Contribution Rate to MainePERS knowing full benefits would not be paid to those receiving social security disability income. Since this was not done, the current legislature has the moral duty to pass this law as it is written to compensate these people for the underpayment of benefits--benefits withheld from the disabled retirees but benefits which rightfully belong to them--not MainePERS.

Disabled people have to spend their disposable income on things and services the rest of us do not. These things never allow them to feel normal or pain free. They are also often unable to do things for themselves or their families they enjoyed and made them feel useful. Passing this law is the least we can do to work together supporting our fellow community members.

I urge the committee to unanimously vote the bill out of committee "Ought to Pass" and make the people harmed by the MainePERS Social Security offset whole.

Thank you for your attention.