



Good afternoon Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is Mary-Jo Abbott, and I have worked as a direct care worker for more than **40 years**. I am here today to testify in support of LD 1932.

Direct care work is deeply personal. We assist individuals with daily living activities, support their independence, and build meaningful, trusting relationships with residents and their families. Over time, the responsibilities and expectations of this work have continued to grow, while the level of support for the direct care workforce has not kept pace.

Burnout and staffing challenges have become increasingly common. Direct care workers are frequently asked to take on additional responsibilities, and many dedicated professionals leave the field—not due to a lack of commitment, but because the work becomes difficult to sustain both financially and physically. When turnover occurs, residents experience the consequences through decreased consistency and continuity of care.

LD 1932 is critical because it supports increased reimbursement rates that can help improve wages, strengthen workforce retention, and promote more stable, high-quality care for residents.

After more than **four decades** in this field, I can say with confidence that investing in direct care workers benefits not only caregivers, but also the individuals and families who rely on our services. I respectfully urge you to support LD 1932.

Thank you for your time and consideration.