

132nd Legislature
***Senate
of Maine***
Senate District 32

Senator Henry Ingwersen
3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0003
Office: (207) 287-1515

Testimony of Senator Henry Ingwersen supporting
LD 1414, An Act to Support and Sustain Maine's Child Care Workforce
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Wednesday, January 21, 2026

Good afternoon, Representative Meyer, and esteemed colleagues on the Health and Human Services Committee. As you know, I am Senator Henry Ingwersen, and I proudly represent Senate District 32, which includes Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Hollis, and Lyman. Today, I am pleased to testify in support of President Daughtry's bill, LD 1414, "**An Act to Support and Sustain Maine's Child Care Workforce.**"

As a former public school teacher and grandfather, I know how important it is to invest early in our children and youth. That's why, in October, I was delighted to accompany President Daughtry, as part of her statewide Child Care Listening Tour, to St. Louis Child Development Center – a part of Catholic Charities of Maine – in Biddeford.

During the visit, we learned about the high-quality child care that St. Louis has been delivering to children of all backgrounds and needs for over 35 years. Indeed, the Center has extensive experience navigating Maine's child care system. And they excel at working with families from all walks of life. I especially appreciated their comments and feedback on how we can make the child care system less burdensome for care providers and families alike.

The bill before you – us – is a direct response to that feedback. The child care workers at St. Louis emphasized the importance of predictability and stability of state child care programs for centers to keep their doors open and retain staff. We need to continue to fund and support the child care subsidy system, and we need to be creative – making new grants available to support this essential infrastructure. It's why I also proudly sponsored a bill to establish and continue the Child Care Employment Award. You've either already heard about that bill, or you will hear about it soon.

I am grateful to the Senate President for sponsoring this bill and making child care a priority. With these critical investments, we can support Mainers with children and the folks who take care of our children – and make it easier and more affordable to start a family here in Maine.

I thank the committee for its time, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Ingwersen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Henry Ingwersen

State Senator, Senate District 32

Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Hollis, and Lyman