

**Testimony of Michael Tyler, Managing Partner
Sandy River Company**

Testimony before the Committee on Health and Human Services in support of

L.D. 2131 An Act to Preserve and Improve Access to Nursing Facility Services

Public Hearing: Wednesday February 10, 2026, at 10:00 AM

Senators Ingwersen, Representatives Meyer, as well as Distinguished Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I would like to thank the sponsors of L.D. 2131, especially Senator Grohoski who presented the bill.

My name is Michael Tyler, and I am the Managing Partner of the Sandy River Company, the Senior Analyst for North Country Associates, Chairman of the Board of Maine Health Care Association and Member of State Workforce Board. I have been involved with the operations and development of long-term care facilities and services in Maine for over 40 years. I am an owner, operator, developer, and consultant, associated with over 30 facilities in the State of Maine.

I am testifying in support of L.D. 2131 because it upholds the commitments made during the establishment of the new nursing facility payment system implemented in 2025.

In 2025, with the implementation of a new rate system and a new Nursing Facility Transition Fund established by the legislature, a very important point was made: **Maine's long-term care facilities are essential, valuable, and worthy of investment.**

Maine Health Care Association and providers worked collaboratively with the Department to develop and negotiate key aspects of this new rate model. We appreciated the opportunity to provide input and while we may not have always agreed, we negotiated in good faith with the shared goal of ensuring that rates are adequate to sustain access to needed care.

The new rate system is barely a year old, but already it appears the promises made to meet that shared goal are being pulled back. LD 2131 assures that the commitments made are followed through. Each section of this bill helps keep nursing homes open.

We don't want to go backwards; remember over the last decade we have seen 29 nursing homes close.

It's important to direct the Department to make the changes proposed in this bill. Doing so will keep nursing care alive for the next generation.

Others will be testifying after me, regarding the specifics of the bill, but I want to be clear that all the good work that was done in collaboration could be risked by not voting yes.

I'm encouraging you to support L.D. 2131.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Mike Tyler