



Testimony of Angela Westhoff, President & CEO Maine Health Care Association

Testimony before the Committee on Health and Human Services In Support of
***LD 1106, An Act to Provide Funds for the Redevelopment of the Island Nursing Home in
Hancock County into Affordable Senior Housing***

Senator Curry and Representative Gere as well as Distinguished Members of the Committee on
Housing and Economic Development:

My name is Angela Westhoff, and I serve as the President & CEO of the Maine Health Care
Association. We represent approximately 200 nursing homes, assisted living centers, and residential
care facilities across the state. Our mission is to empower members to ensure the integrity, quality,
and sustainability of long term care in Maine.

I am providing written testimony in support of ***LD 1106, An Act to Provide Funds for the
Redevelopment of the Island Nursing Home in Hancock County into Affordable Senior Housing.***
Over the last 10 years, Maine has lost 29 nursing homes. Hancock County has no nursing homes left.
Half of Washington County's homes have closed since 2014. Just two months ago, another nursing
home in Aroostook County announced it would have to close. Maine has the fewest skilled nursing
home beds per 1,000 residents in the entire Northeastern United States. As the oldest state in the
country, access to long term care and affordable housing for Maine's older adult population should
be a top priority.

The closure of Island Nursing Home was devastating to the residents, the families, the staff and the
community. Board members of the facility tried desperately to keep the facility open and they also
explored options of trying to reopen as a residential care facility. However, the ongoing challenges of
MaineCare reimbursement rates being so low that they do not cover the cost of care, coupled with a
staffing shortage, were just too insurmountable. I urge the committee to consider the small
investment needed to help redevelop the facility into affordable housing for older adults living in
Hancock County. Thank you for your time.