



Testimony of Bob Dunfey, Volunteer Race Director of the Maine Marathon, which raised over \$510,000 for nonprofits in 2019, Member of board of directors of Southern Maine Agency of Aging as well as nonprofits, a resident of Portland, ME

To Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services In Favor of LD 485 – An Act to Continue Funding for Home-delivered Meals for Homebound Seniors and To Address Growing Demand.

Thank you, Senate Chair Claxton and House Chair Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services for this opportunity today to speak about meals delivered to homebound seniors.

My name is Bob Dunfey.

Last spring, I offered to volunteer to deliver Meals on Wheels during the Southern Maine Agency for the Aging board of directors meeting when CEO, Megan Walton told the board that fear of Coronavirus caused many volunteers to resign.

I planned to deliver meals on a temporary basis until those volunteers returned after the pandemic. After several weeks I changed my mind and hoped to continue to volunteer indefinitely.

It is a very rewarding experience since I know that I am making a difference in the lives of many seniors each week in addition to the nutritious meals. The personal contact I make each week helps to combat the loneliness as well as help them feel valued. I receive kind words and smiles even from those who were a bit grouchy when I started delivering meals.

Sometimes the senior may seek advice or just wants to talk. Recently one senior told me she won the lottery. After I asked some probing questions, I told her she was being scammed and I contacted Adult Protective Services to assist her.

Over 57,000 older Mainers are threatened by hunger, but Meals on Wheels serves just over 10,000 of them last year up from about 5,000 the prior year. The pandemic has doubled the demand. This program should be available to any Maine senior who can benefit from it.

Whenever I share my Meals on Wheels experiences with friends, they respond very positively about the program. I never hear any criticism of the program.

I encourage you to support Bill #485. Thank you for your service.