



**Northern Light
Health**

**LD 485 An Act To Continue Funding for Home-delivered Meals for Homebound Seniors
and To Address Growing Demand**

Testimony in Support

March 17, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN, I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations to speak in support of this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with over 12,000 employees statewide.

Home delivered meals are an essential component of our comprehensive approach to care for individuals in their homes. When patients first come home from the hospital they are often weak and tend not to prepare meals of nutritional value. Home delivered meals provide the nutritional support they need to regain their health and prevent rehospitalizations. One of our home care nurses working to obtain geriatric certification focused her project on the impact that home delivered meals has on our patients. She found that patient receiving home delivered meals following hospitalization had a 12% reduction in their rehospitalization rate with just one week of meal service. Our nurses also rely on the value of routine checks provided by volunteers delivering the meals.

Today as we work to identify all of the home bound or at-risk seniors in need of COVID-19 vaccination Area Agencies on Aging are an essential partner. Many of the individuals receiving home delivered meals have no immediate family available and we will include these individuals in our home vaccination program.

We ask that you support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you.

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Northern Light Health

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Eastern Maine Medical Center
Home Care & Hospice
Inland Hospital
Maine Coast Hospital
Mercy Hospital
Northern Light Health Foundation
Sebasticook Valley Hospital