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## **TESTIMONY**

In Support of

**LD 578, Resolve Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter  
Regulations Governing the Licensing and Functioning of Assisted Housing  
Programs: Infection Prevention and Control, a Major Substantive Rule  
Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Licensing and  
Certification**

**Patricia Thorsen  
Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

**March 17, 2021**

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is Patricia Thorsen. I am the Ombudsman Program Manager. The Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is a statewide non-profit organization that provides advocacy for older adults and adults with disabilities who receive long-term services and supports in various settings. We serve residents in nursing homes, assisted housing including residential care facilities, assisted living facilities, adult day programs and recipients of home care services. Additionally, we serve patients in hospitals who experience barriers in accessing long-term services and supports.

We are pleased to provide testimony in support of these regulations for Assisted Housing

Early in the pandemic, we worked with the Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services, Division of Licensing and Certification and Maine CDC to conduct infection control surveys in all long-term care facilities across the state. This was helpful in determining infection control practices and providing education to assist facilities to carry out best practices in infection control. Additionally, the Office of Aging and Disability Services engaged infection control consultants to support facilities with infection control and prevention practices.

These regulations are critical in guiding Assisted Housing Programs through the pandemic by protecting residents from COVID-19.

Thank you for your consideration.