



Christian Civic League of Maine

(Please note I added a few words at the end of this testimony from our ExD Carroll Conley as he is out of town).

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Maine Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Mike McClellan, Policy Director for the Christian Civic League of Maine. The Christian Civic League of Maine envisions a state and nation where God is honored, religious freedom flourishes, families thrive, and life is cherished. We believe a Biblical approach works in life and including in governance.

I am here to testify in favor of LD 1064, An Act To Advance Palliative Care Utilization in the State. In testifying I looked to the proposed legislation and the request your committee made to the Palliative Care and Quality of Life Interdisciplinary Advisory Council resulting in their report back. This bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to provide reimbursement under the MaineCare program for palliative care for the entire interdisciplinary team as appropriate to the plan of care, regardless of setting, including hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics and home care providers. It also requires rules that support and standardize the delivery of palliative care in the State, strategies for public educational - distribution by health care providers of information regarding the availability of palliative care to patients. It also requires the department to consult with the Maine Hospice Council, the Palliative Care and Quality of Life Interdisciplinary Advisory Council and other stakeholders (*experts) when developing educational documents and rules related to palliative care.

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both patient and the family. For some (many?) that quality includes remaining home and with loved ones. In healthcare, it is especially important to have and offer options to care as we are all different. The council report shares that barriers to palliative care in Maine as being an option include, lack of information on palliative care to professionals, (and) to consumers, lack of workforce capacity and lack of reliable and sustainable reimbursement for services. (in short, education and sustained funding). The report and now this legislation pledges to work to move forward on both counts.

Studies cited in the report showed results from supporting palliative care education and sustaining funding to include affecting in a positive manner hospital stays (down), hospital deaths (the chance to be home with loved one, also down) and costs of care to patients (less expensive). States such as Arizona, Colorado and California have aggressively moved to create support for Palliative Care which has resulted in access, trust and consistency in the programing and funding. We are told these studies would seem to reflect well on doing the same for our rural state, Maine. Passing LD 1064 would allow the options and supports of this programing to flourish in our state. It would allow Palliative Care to be a viable option for Maine citizens.

I ask the committee and the entire Maine Legislature to look and see the hope, the positive benefits and the options that will be created by your support of LD 1064. Thank you.

A Statement from Carroll Conley, Executive Director of the Christian Civic League

I want to thank the members of this committee who have been effective allies over the years regarding end-of-life issues. I am especially thankful for the leadership of Kandyce Powell and Representative Margaret Craven for their contributions to this legislation.

I commend LD 1064's emphasis on education and promotion of palliative care and the requirement for the consultation of foundation X regarding rules and implementation. The Christian Civic League enthusiastically endorses the passage of LD 1064.

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Carroll Conley

[Executive Director](#)

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