

Palliative care facilities and practitioners are essential parts of Maine's healthcare system, as important to patients and their loved ones as operating rooms and emergency departments. Because of this, I support LD 1064. Palliative care services, like most of medicine, are labor intensive and, therefore, expensive. No mention is made in the bill of the source of funds to pay for its benefits other than, "The Department (of Health and Human Services - WN) shall provide reimbursement under the 20MaineCare program for palliative care". That may be a flaw in the bill, or it may be appropriate at this stage of the bill's review – I'm not familiar with these things. Nevertheless, I support the bill because palliative care experts should "have a seat at the table" as priorities for limited MaineCare resources are established. In some scenarios the Legislature might be pleased to learn that a well-organized palliative care department can actually save money. Regardless, easing the passage of a patient from life into death is the worthiest of goals. Please support LD 1064.

Disclosure: Although I am a physician, I am retired, and I have no pecuniary interest in any palliative care services.