

**TESTIMONY OF Richard A. Erb
President and CEO
Maine Health Care Association**

**April 5, 2021 1:00 pm
To the Joint Standing Committee on Health & Human Services**

In Support of L.D. 1197

Resolve, To Require Continued MaineCare Reimbursement to Nursing Facilities for Bed Hold Days during Hospitalization and Therapeutic Leaves of Absence

Good afternoon Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Committee. My name is Rick Erb and I am the President and CEO of the Maine Health Care Association. Our organization represents nursing homes and assisted living facilities. I am pleased to testify in support of LD 1197 today and thank Senator Baldacci for sponsoring it.

This issue should sound familiar to us all, as it was an issue for us during hearings on the Supplemental Budget and the Biennial Budget. There were proposals in both budgets to eliminate reimbursement for direct care costs during the bed hold period.

Our point has been that actual costs do not decline when one or two residents are temporarily away from the facility. Reducing the number of staff is simply not practical. Residents need to be assured that their nursing home bed will still be there for them after hospitalization or any other temporary absence, but it's not fair for the nursing home to receive less compensation.

This Committee has already voted against cuts like these twice and I urge you to put your support for bed hold payments into statute, as called for by LD 1197.