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Written Testimony in Support of LD415:
Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services
To Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Targeted Case Management
To Reflect Inflation
April 15, 2021

Good afternoon, Senator Gratwick, Representative Hymanson, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Maureen Bilodeau, and I am the Director of Children's Services and Case Management at The Progress Center. I appreciate the opportunity to come before the committee in support of LD415.

The Progress Center has provided services to children, families and adults who are living with disabilities and mental health disorders in Maine for 40 years. We serve over 400 individuals and employ about 160 community members. We currently work with individuals in Cumberland, Oxford, Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, York, Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties.

We provide critical case management services to adults with disabilities as well as children with disabilities and /or mental health disorders. Case managers are incredibly important in connecting folks and their families with services that support their basic needs. Community Case Management develops and oversees a comprehensive and individualized person centered plan with an emphasis on principles of empowerment, community inclusion, health and safety, and the use of natural supports. Our team provides support, advocacy, and coordination of services that our clients receive through waiver services. Children's Case Management assess those who are in need and develops a comprehensive plan on how to guide families to a level of independence. Often introducing parents to services that are available in the community that they would otherwise not know about and cannot access independently.

We struggle to hire, train and retain good case managers and are hardly ever able to meet the pay demands of those with experience. Often we are training folks just out of school, increasing our training time with them and then seeing them move on after a year. This is devastating to this industry. The population we work with has a difficult time with transitions and when they have developed trust with their case manager just in time for them to have a change in case manager they lose faith in the system.

In adult case management, there are changes occurring regarding HCBS which is impacting case managers by increasing job duties. Case Managers are experiencing increased caseloads to offset costs of increased expenses and current reimbursement rates. In children's case management, we are experiencing difficulty in providing competitive wages and benefits without increasing already large caseloads.



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Without an increase to offset a decade of inflation, The Progress Center will be unable to maintain the capacity needed to ensure individuals with disabilities and mental health disorders have access to the care and support they need to live and thrive in the community.

I urge your support of LD415.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony. Please contact me with any questions you may have.