



Committee on Health and Human Services
c/o Kerri Withee, Legislative Information Office
Cross Building, Room 209
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: LD415:

Dear Senator Claxton , Representative Meyer, and other members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Jerry Marx. I am a resident of Portland and Executive Director of the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. There are over 5,000 licensed social workers providing health services to individuals and families throughout the state. We are the largest provider of mental health services in the nation.

NASW Maine supports LD415, Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Targeted Case Management Services to Reflect Inflation. My understanding is that this resolve, submitted by Representative Stearns of Guilford and co-sponsored by Representative Meyer of Eliot, requires the Department of Health and Human Services to amend its rules governing MaineCare reimbursement for targeted case management services to provide an increase reflecting cost increases from 2010 to 2020. Such an adjustment for cost of living increases has not been made since 2009.

A 2019 NASW Maine survey of 5,000 social workers revealed that low pay and low reimbursement rates for services are social workers' two highest concerns. These conditions contribute to social work shortages and other challenges in meeting client needs, particularly in more rural parts of Maine. Notably, low reimbursement contributes directly to independent clinicians choosing not to accept MaineCare clients, decreasing access to services for Maine residents with disabilities.

This resolve will help to insure access to disability services for both children and adults in Maine. I urge you all to vote yes on LD415.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry Marx, PhD
Executive Director
NASW Maine Chapter
jmarx.naswme@socialworkers.org

References:

NASW, Maine Chapter. (2021) *About*.



<https://naswme.socialworkers.org/About#:~:text=The%20NASW%2DMaine%20Chapter%2C%20with,work%20organization%20in%20the%20state.&text=Professional%20social%20workers%20are%20the,of%20mental%20health%20service%20providers.>