

April 20, 2021

*RE: LD 878 – Resolve, to Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Services Provided by Direct Care Workers.*

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to submit my written testimony in support of this bill to increase reimbursement rates to direct care workers for services that are provided in home and community-based settings by no less than \$2 an hour.

As a DSP (direct support professional) that was able to grow into a management position at my community support program, and now oversees a team of DSP's, I understand deeply how necessary a rate increase is in this field. I would not have been able to remain in this field of work without being able to grow to a management position, because I wouldn't be making a livable wage as a DSP. Moving up to a management position is not a realistic expectation for every DSP who enters this field, and shouldn't have to be. We need to provide better reimbursement for the staff who are providing direct care in home and community-based settings, which is vital work.

90% of my staff turn-over is due to my DSP's having to move on to higher paying jobs, to be able to afford their living expenses. These are passionate and dedicated people who provided amazing supports to the individuals we work with, but financially this field isn't sustainable and they had to move on. We have a staffing crisis in this field, which isn't going to resolve until we can provide better compensation to our direct care workers.

Sincerely,

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