

Janet T. Mills  
Governor



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Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.  
Commissioner

April 20, 2021

Senator Ned Claxton, Chair  
Representative Michelle Meyer, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 878 – *Resolve, To Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Services Provided by Direct Care Workers*

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

This letter is to provide testimony in opposition to LD 878, *Resolve, To Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Services Provided by Direct Care Workers*. This resolve provides for a \$2 per hour rate increase for providers who deliver home and community-based services (HCBS).

The Department does not believe an increase in rates is warranted at this time. MaineCare Benefits Manual (MBM), Chapter II, Sections 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, and 96 supported employment, residential and day habilitation, and personal support services, the HCBS services that rely on direct care workers, have either received rate increases over the past year or are scheduled to receive rate increases in the next few months. Some of these increases were proposed in the Governor's Biennial Budget proposal. The updated rates have been calculated to provide adequate reimbursement for the provision of these services, including allowances for updated wages, all of which are more than sufficient to cover minimum wage. MaineCare's recently completed Comprehensive Rate Setting Evaluation (CRSE) showed that HCBS rates for these services ranged from 105% to 150% of rates for comparable services in five comparison Medicaid states.

Moreover, the CRSE recommends rebasing rates every five years, with inflation given in between each rebasing, to ensure that rates are regularly and predictably updated to maintain adequate reimbursements rates. The Department is currently reviewing the CRSE recommendations for adoption and timeline.

We wanted you to be aware of the above information as you consider this bill going forward. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Probert".

Michelle Probert  
Director  
MaineCare Services