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**Testimony of Rep. John Tuttle
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
In Support of LD 1470, Resolve, Regarding Reimbursement for Providing Inpatient Care
to Individuals with Acute Mental Health Care Needs**

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is John Tuttle and I represent House District 18: part of the city of Sanford. I'm pleased to testify in strong support of **LD 1470, Resolve, Regarding Reimbursement for Providing Inpatient Care to Individuals with Acute Mental Health Care Needs.**

As you likely heard from Rep. Meyer, the committee first worked on this bill in the 129th Legislature when it was known as LD 1856. My esteemed predecessor and now the current mayor of Sanford, Anne-Marie Mastraccio, was the original sponsor.

She brought this bill to you to ensure that Southern Maine Health Care would be correctly reimbursed by MaineCare for the services provided through the new behavioral health beds on the Goodall Hospital campus. An overwhelming bipartisan majority of the committee supported the bill, but unfortunately it joined the ranks of the many thoughtful pieces of legislation derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I don't want to go on, but I do want to emphasize that Southern Maine Health Care is meeting a critical behavioral health care need for our communities - a need that is only growing. LD 1470 acknowledges their investment and ensures that the reimbursement rate reflects the true cost of providing this invaluable care. It will benefit many of our constituents and their families, and it will set an appropriate precedent for future behavioral health investments elsewhere in Maine. Let's follow through on the work we began last year and move this bill forward.

Thank you for this chance to testify. I am grateful to the Hon. Anne-Marie Mastraccio for her guidance and to Rep. Meyer for her excellent leadership and her work to make sure this legislation didn't slip through the cracks. I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee, though I imagine we will have some very well qualified people testifying after me who might be able to better address the more technical aspects of MaineCare reimbursement contracts.