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Good morning, Senator Claxton, Representative Myer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of LD 1573 An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Study Long-term Care Workforce Issues.

My name is Derek and the biggest challenge for me to stay in this career field is the wages and the high turnover rates that cause an immensely stressful environment. These low wages do not allow myself or my family much time because overtime is the only way to survive. There is no work life balance.

I am increasingly worried about short staffing. This causes undue stress on the people I support. They are not getting to live a good life. They are simply existing. Without proper staffing we cannot properly monitor medication administration. Take to health appointments or get them engaged within their communities. They are incredibly isolated due to the high turnover rate. I feel like Maine does not value DSP's. We are consistently left out but do something so incredibly important.

We are asked repeatedly to rise above and beyond for one of the most vulnerable populations and we get empty thank you's from our leaders. I would like to see our state respect what we do and pay us a worthy wage so that these wonderful people that receive supports do not suffer from lack of staffing.

Sincerely,
Derek Cain
DSP at OHI
Bangor, Maine