



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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**Testimony of Rep. Margaret Craven introducing
*LD 1624, Resolve, To Create a Stakeholder Group To Identify the Needs of
Long-term Care Family Caregivers*
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services**

Good morning, Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and fellow members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Margaret Craven, and I represent House District 59, which is part of Lewiston. I am pleased to be in front of you this morning to introduce **LD 1624, Resolve, To Create a Stakeholder Group To Identify the Needs of Long-Term Care Family Caregivers.**

This resolve requires the long-term care ombudsman program to establish a stakeholder group to consider and make recommendations for the implementation of an assessment measure for the needs of family caregivers providing long-term care services to family members, to establish a plan to improve referrals to services and to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services no later than January 2, 2022.

AARP Maine will work with the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program to bring stakeholders together to consider the implementation of a family caregiver assessment. The Office of Aging and Disability Services, Department of Health and Human Services will participate in this effort along with stakeholders from across the continuum of long-term services and supports. Most important, family caregivers will be included in the workgroup.

The number of family caregivers is increasing steadily. Maine families provide 2.2 billion in unpaid caregiving annually. (AARP Valuing the Invaluable 2017) Often, family caregivers are not given the support and resources they need to provide care though they play a critical role in our long-term care system. Family caregivers are at risk for multiple and serious physical and mental health conditions. (Family Caregiver Alliance) We must consider strategies to support these caregivers.

Approximately 30 states are utilizing the TCARE assessment to determine the needs of family caregivers. The assessment has resulted in a reduction in depression and stress and in delaying

care in a long-term care facility. Washington State has utilized TCARE with great success reducing costs to Medicaid by 20 million annually. Staff in Washington State are interested in supporting the efforts of the workgroup here in Maine.

I know this is important work for Maine's family caregivers.