

Gina LeDuc-Kuntz
Freeport

Dear Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Gina LeDuc-Kuntz and I am a resident of Freeport.

I am writing you today to urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1427. In my opinion, LD1427 is an important first step in finding creative solutions for families to care for their elderly family members without sacrificing their own financial well being. Families, if willing, should have the backing from public policy to support each other and contribute to each others stability.

My own mother-in-law would have benefited from this policy change when it came to her end of life care. She desired to stay at home after she suffered a stroke, but remained institutionalized as family members could not leave work to care for her fulltime at home and she did not have the private funds to hire in-home care.

In the end, the cost of her care was significant and fell to the Maine Estate Recovery Unit. All of this may have been avoidable if family members had means to care for her in the home without jeopardizing their own financial health.

This is only one simple story. I imagine Maine is littered with hundreds, if not thousands, of similar stories. Institutional care is very, very expensive and if well crafted public policy can support a shift, in some cases, of care for the elderly to the home this is a win for the State, a win for the families and a win for our elderly.

Thank you for your time.

Gina LeDuc-Kuntz
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