

May 3, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee

My name is Simonne Maline, a resident of Winthrop. I am here to testify in support of **LD 1624 Resolve, To Create A Stakeholder Group to Identify the Needs of Long-term Care Family Caregivers.**

I normally come to you to discuss mental health bills for my organization. When I am not working full time, I care for my husband Walter who sustained a brain injury almost 8 years ago. He has been in many hospitals and nursing home rehabs since then. I have always told him without a doubt I would do **anything** to keep him home and I will say to all of you this comes at a huge personal cost but one I am willing to pay for as long as I am able.

Walter has qualified for MaineCare Sect 19 for 6 years now. So many providers have come in and out of our homes and into his personal body space. That is a big part of home care. Since Walter qualified for PSS services, we have NEVER been fully staffed for his hours. Not once. Never. We have had the same provider for a couple years now that we are grateful for. She cannot work more than 40 hours with him even if she wanted to.

While 40 hours of caregiving is great, it really covers when I am working full time. When I am not working at my job, I am caring for him.

I support the stakeholder group 1000% as I do not think there will be fixes to the system to infuse enough caregivers to allow people like me to just be a spouse and not mix the role with care giving. Some may choose to be caregivers but right now we do not have choice.

I have been so frustrated with caregiving agencies that I asked my then Senator to submit a bill to oversee PSS agencies. That never survived past HHS Committee several years ago. Most family caregivers are too busy to be here today. They are busy providing care!

Family caregivers need to be heard and supported as they are an essential part of the workforce of providing critical care to their loved ones.

I urge you to vote out to pass on LD 1624 to support the voice of families in this vital work!

Thank you,

Simonne Maline

Winthrop