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Testimony in Favor of LD 1624: Resolve, to Create a Stakeholder Group to Identify the Needs of Long-term Care

Greetings Chairs Senator Claxton and Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is Bridget Quinn and I am the Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach for AARP Maine. AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our more than 200,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony.

Today, I am testifying in support of LD 1624.

AARP's 2020 report "Caregiving in the U.S"¹ states that "As the country continues to age, the need to support caregivers as the cornerstone of society will only become more and more important." As the oldest state in the country, with approximately 181,000 family caregivers, this is particularly true in Maine.

The report's data suggests that many caregivers may take on this role without adequate or affordable services and supports in place. As a result, family caregivers report physical, emotional, and financial strain, and 2 in 10 say they are lonely.

Supports for family caregivers will be even more critical if this trend in caregiver burnout and negative health impacts continues. Burnout can result in caregivers becoming unable to provide care, or compromising their own physical and mental health.

Caregivers provide a broad list of services including managing household tasks, running errands, arranging for transportation to medical appointments, monitoring medications and even providing direct care such as changing bandages and wound care. In providing this care, caregivers enable their loved ones to remain in their homes for longer, and prevent unnecessary and costly hospitalizations.

¹ <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2020/05/full-report-caregiving-in-the-united-states.doi.10.26419-2Fppi.00103.001.pdf>



Given the vital role of unpaid family caregivers, their mental and physical health deserves greater attention and support. LD 1624 will work to create an assessment measure for family caregivers. Such assessments will identify the needs of at-risk family caregivers and reduce the risk of “burn out.”

Family caregivers in Maine are a vital, unheralded, group of people. They often lack information on what resources are available or how to access them. LD 1624 will provide the information needed to craft a statewide response that will make an enormous difference to this important segment of our state.

I urge this Committee to approve LD 1624. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Bridget Quinn,
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Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach

