



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

(207) 287-1400

TTY: Maine Relay 711

Margaret Craven

41 Russell Street
Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 783-1897

Margaret.Craven@legislature.maine.gov

May 20, 2021

Testimony of Representative Margaret Craven in support of
LD 296, An Act to Create the Family Caregiver Grant Pilot Program
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Sen. Claxton, Rep. Meyer and honorable 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 here today to speak in support of **LD 296, An Act to Create the Family Caregiver Grant Pilot Program**.

On this committee, we know all too well the staffing shortages for Home Care services and the burden family members endure when they cannot secure help for their loved ones. This bill would be a beginning, a pilot program to study and design a program that would serve our aged and ageing population.

For people on a fixed income, there are many needs we don't even think of until the need arises, like durable medical equipment, installing grab rails or installing ramps. This benefit would go a long way towards covering the co-pay that comes with a motorized lift chair or motorized recliner that helps a person get up from a sitting position.

According to AARP, in 2017 approximately 181,000 family caregivers provided 152 million hours of care in Maine. Those unpaid hours amounted to 2.2 billion dollars. Nationally, the free care is valued at \$470 billion.

I know I am preaching to the choir here in HHS, but this is a great time to launch this experiment because we have one-time federal dollars to help our overwhelmed families. 60% of caregivers also have to work to make ends meet.

Thank you for your time and attention.