

Karen Foley
Skowhegan
LD 1964

To: The Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing

Re: Testimony In Support of LD 1964, An Act to Implement the Recommendations
of the Commission to
Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program

May 23, 2023

Karen M. Foley
Skowhegan, Maine

Dear Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and honorable members of the
Committee:

My name is Karen Foley and I live in Skowhegan. I am submitting this testimony
today in support of paid family and medical leave for Maine.

I have five grandchildren under the age of five. My daughters are college educated
women, who waited until their thirties, when they were financially stable, to have
children. One is employed in the university system, and one runs her own business,
and yet, I have watched them struggle to find affordable, safe solutions to caring for
their children. Twelve weeks of leave is simply not enough for a newborn. Neither
mother nor baby are ready to separate at that point. In the case of two of my
grandchildren, they were born prematurely, and needed extra care, and going into day
care right away was a health risk for them. Yet, families need two incomes to survive
in this economy. Even when they are ready, affordable day care is a luxury, and
waiting lists are often a year or more.

It is a given that healthy babies and healthy mothers are essential to a thriving
community. It is obvious that if families have the ability to take care of their loved
ones at home, whether it's a newborn baby or a sick family member, or an elderly
parent, that we not only have healthier, happier, safer families, but we save
considerable money in the long run.

For these reasons, I ask that you vote in support of LD 1964. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Karen M. Foley