

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”

Good afternoon Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. My name is Scott Harriman, I live in Lewiston, and I am testifying in support of LD 1964, “An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Develop a Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program.”

Like many of my fellow Mainers, I have experienced several occasions where I have needed to take an extended amount of time off from work. In my case, it has mostly been due to injuries and chronic physical issues which limited my ability to continue doing my job. During these times, I had to go without a paycheck and I struggled financially in addition to physically.

I also have family members who are currently going through a tough situation with their young daughter, who is undergoing treatment for cancer. They have taken numerous unpaid leaves of absence from work to take care of her medical needs, enduring all the financial strain that goes along with that while also raising their two other children. Their friends and community recently organized a benefit dinner and a raffle as a fundraiser for them, but they are just one family out of many across Maine who find themselves in situations like this.

Maine also has the oldest population of any state in the country and we’re only getting older. As our parents and grandparents continue to age, they are going to require more care from younger family members, especially given the challenge that employers are having filling job openings for caregivers. This bill will afford people the ability to provide that necessary care to their family without experiencing severe financial hardship.

Paid Family and Medical Leave has strong support statewide, as evidenced by the tens of thousands of signatures that have already been collected to put the issue out to referendum if the Legislature does not act. I helped to collect some of those signatures last November, and I met people of all ages and from all walks of life who were eager to voice their enthusiastic support for such a program.

Please vote **Ought To Pass** on LD 1964. Maine workers and families deserve it and our economy will be stronger because of it. Thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Harriman (he/him)
Lewiston, Maine
harriman.scott@gmail.com