

May 24, 2023

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

Position: Support

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing,

I am writing in support of LD1964, a bill whose time has come and whose benefits would make a tremendous difference in the lives of Maine workers and families.

I retired to Maine in 2010 after a 35 year career with the Social Security Administration in NY and NJ. Over the decades, I helped countless individuals and families apply for permanent disability benefits when the state based benefits they received in those states expired after 26 weeks of temporary disability. The residents there were very fortunate that they were covered by a source of income for 5 months when illness or injury struck and a person could not work.

In Maine, the Earned Pay Leave Law, enacted January 1, 2021, allows only 5 days of paid leave for employees. For those who are diagnosed with an illness or injury where they need treatment, or for those who welcome a new child to their family, and especially for those whose employer does not provide paid family or medical leave, 40 hours is woefully inadequate.

We all know that life and health can change in an instant. When it does change, we need to be able pay our rent, our mortgages, our taxes, buy food, put the lights and heat on and just deal with getting well instead of worrying about a total loss of income. Please help strengthen the economic fabric of Maine families by passing the Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program.

Please vote "Ought to Pass" on LD1964.

Thank you for all you do,

Sincerely,

Jessica D Linzer (aka Jessica Simpson)

