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Please continue to work to fund our state employees! I absolutely love my job and am so proud to represent the state and support the children of Maine in my role. As a young woman in my 30s, I grew up in Maine and want to start a family here. The only piece that gives me pause is the pay here in Maine compared to the benefits and pay I can receive elsewhere.

In my particular state branch, I find the workloads do not match the pay and know that a similar role in another neighboring state would mean more financial stability. Please check out the work classification study that digs more deeply into this issue: [bit.ly/2020MarketStudyReport](https://bit.ly/2020MarketStudyReport).

It sometimes feels like Maine does not prioritize attracting employees for the long term by working to redesign systems around current employee needs and remove systemic barriers to enable workers to build a balanced family life. In general, I feel torn between the mission and purpose of my current role and the financial stability and work-life balance I could achieve in a different organization/ state. Two working parents are essential to make ends meet these days.

At the top of my mind is my growing concern that the state pay scale has not and will not keep up with the rising costs of housing and inflation. Please consider investing in state employees and fighting against the years of cuts and wage stagnation to ensure that it is financially viable and accessible for a working woman to raise a family without fear of instability in the back of her mind. Thank you for listening and please continue to invest in our public institutions!