

Megan Scott
Waterville
LD 1854

Testimony of Megan Scott, MSW

In support of LD 1854 - "An Act to Complete and Implement the Comprehensive Review of the Classification and Compensation System for Executive Branch Employees"

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, and members of the Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Megan Scott. I am a resident of Waterville and a Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention employee. I have worked at the Maine CDC for nearly four years and have served in a management capacity for two. I have prepared these comments in support of LD 1854 on my own personal time because I feel that my experience with the reclassification and hiring processes illustrate why this bill is so important.

The team I lead at Maine CDC was previously in another office within DHHS. When it transferred to Maine CDC, the management position retained the classification it had at the previous office, which was a class lower than the three other managers within the program it joined. The manager at the time never initiated a reclassification process. When she retired and I was promoted two years ago, I worked with my Program Director to submit the required paperwork to reclassify the position. To date, my position still has not been reclassified, but in that time my position has changed significantly. When I started, I anticipated managing a team of two but now manage a team of five and will ultimately have a team of seven direct reports when two open positions are filled giving me the largest team in my program. I love my job, and I certainly never expected to make a lot of money working in public health, however I struggle with not having parity with the other managers in my program. Not considering the estimated 15% state employees in general are underpaid, I estimate that I am being underpaid at least \$6,000 annually, which as a single mother of two is significant especially as basic living costs have increased dramatically. Although my direct supervisors have been tremendous advocates, the system is broken and I struggle to feel that my work is valued.

As mentioned above, my team has grown over the last two years, meaning I have spent a substantial amount of time engaged in the hiring process. Most recently I have struggled to fill three open positions. One I filled after posting three times, another four times and still another I have now posted five times and hope to fill after the posting closes tomorrow. Each round requires a significant amount of my time between reviewing candidate resumes, conducting interviews, checking references, salary negotiations, and paperwork. Some rounds I have received terrific applicants but they are unable to accept the salary they are offered even though they are extremely interested in the position. Other rounds I have not received any qualified candidates. The expectations of these positions far outweigh their classification and pay scales, and my current staff most definitely work outside of their class. I want nothing more than to be able to attract the best candidates and ultimately pay my staff what they deserve for the extremely challenging and vitally important roles they fill.

I believe LD 1854 is imperative to making sure I can hire qualified candidates and most importantly retain the dedicated and hard working staff I currently have. Thank you to the committee for your consideration of my comments. I urge you to give LD 1854 a favorable report and vote ought to pass.