

February 8, 2024

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, members of the Committee on State and Local Government,

I am submitting testimony on my own time in support of LD 2121, An Act to Address Chronic Understaffing of State Government Positions, sponsored by Representative Drew Gattine.

I'd like to address the importance of funding public services and addressing continued retention issues. I have been a state employee working for DHHS for over 26 years. The importance of funding public services and retention continues to be a concern.

During my years of state service, I have seen high to impossible caseloads, lack of resources, lack of support from management, and lack of training to support the job. To continue to provide quality services, it is important to provide funding to retain and attract well qualified workers. It is important to stay competitive with the private sector. I have seen people leave because they have found jobs that have better benefits and/or salary as well as less stress due to more manageable job duties.

DHHS has been an ever-evolving system with changes in management, direction of services, changes in technology, and policy. As a state employee, this is very challenging to continue to manage on a direct-care level.

The need to adequately fund public services can make a difference in the quality, longevity of workers, the amount of experience state employees have, and attract more qualified workers.

I urge you to support LD 2121, address the pay gap in comparison to other states, adequately fund and prevent staff shortages, and ensure adequate resources such as training and technology.

Amy Hill, Augusta