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Portland
LD 818

I strongly support LD 818: Allow MCEA Funds to Cover Caregiving Expenses.

As a parent of a 5-year-old, I know that childcare expenses can add up quickly. Especially for families where all of the parents work, you often need a babysitter to enable work trips or late-night meetings. Even in households with a stay-at-home parent, babysitters are still needed when the parents both need to be somewhere that isn't kid-friendly, or if non-work obligations make one parent unable to be with the kids while the other is working.

For candidates for public office, many important meetings and events take place outside of normal working hours, since members of neighborhood or civic organizations have jobs they need to schedule around. Evening hours are also prime time for canvassing to collect signatures to get on the ballot, since most residents are away at work when schools are open.

For candidates who are parents, this means they either need to bring their kid(s) on the campaign trail with them, or arrange childcare to allow them to be fully present at these events. The former isn't ideal, but the latter can get expensive fast, and under current law MCEA funds aren't allowed to be used for childcare, even though it is undeniably a cost of campaigning.

Allowing MCEA funds to cover caregiving expenses would end this accidental discrimination against candidates who are parents of small children. Please vote YES on this bill so that more parents can run for office and take part in our democracy.