We know ordinary Mainers are having a hard time finding home care, behavioral health services, support for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and access to assisted living and nursing home care for themselves and their loved ones.

Today, we call on Maine Legislators to pass and fully fund LD 1573, a bill that would raise wages for workers, pay providers for unfunded mandates, and require regular rate adjustments. We hope you’ll join us!

Maine doesn’t have enough “essential support workers” – people who work in home and community-based settings who provide vital assistance and daily support with core aspects of life to all kinds of people who need help.

We’ve underestimated this workforce for decades, and now, with our tight labor market, they can earn more working almost anywhere else. Providers can’t pay competitive wages unless the State pays higher rates for these services.

This means thousands of older people, people who have physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities, and people with behavioral health challenges cannot get the support they need, unless we pay a more competitive wage to these workers. As we fail to act, waitlists for these services grow.

With a healthy state surplus and a billion dollars coming to Maine through the American Rescue Plan Act, the time is now to raise MaineCare and state-funded rates to stabilize and grow Maine’s Essential Support Workforce across all populations and in all settings. This is good for our economy and ensures thousands of people and their families can get the support they need.

If you’ve had a hard time finding the support you need for yourself or someone you love, we hope you’ll join us in asking our lawmakers and Governor Mills to take action now to fund LD 1573 to build a strong essential support workforce ready to meet our current and future needs.

Leave a message for your Senator by calling (800) 423-2900
Leave a message for your Representative by calling (800) 423-2900
Or find the contact for your legislator by town at https://legislature.maine.gov/house/house/MemberProfiles/ListAlphaTown

Contact Governor Mills https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/contact

LD 1573 gets unanimous bi-partisan support in the Health & Human Services Committee and will:

Identify ’essential support workers’ across all populations and settings
Require the wage portion of the MaineCare/state-funded rate be set at 125% of minimum wage
Require rates to include reimbursement for unfunded mandates

Adjust for COLA every 2 years, and Rebases every 5 years

Leaders of the organizations listed below ask, if not now, when?

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If not now, when will we invest in Maine’s ESSENTIAL SUPPORT WORKFORCE?