



**Written Testimony of Jess Maurer on Behalf of  
The Maine Council on Aging  
To Joint Standing Committee on  
Health and Human Services**

**Testimony in Support of LD 1197**

**Delivered in writing on April 5, 2021**

Greetings Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health & Human Services:

My name is Jess Maurer. I'm the Executive Director of the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA). The MCOA is a broad, multidisciplinary network of more than 100 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and older Mainers working to make sure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age in our homes and communities. I am writing in support of LD 1197, Resolve To Require Continued MaineCare Reimbursement to Nursing Facilities for Bed Hold Days during Hospitalizations and Therapeutic Leaves of Absence.

Moving is challenging for any of us. However, when you have to move without wanting to and with little choice, the move can cause trauma and be very stressful, particularly for people with cognitive decline. That's why, from a policy perspective, we should do all that we can to minimize the likelihood of a nursing home resident losing their bed and having to move to a new facility due to hospitalization. In addition, because of staffing shortages, losing a nursing home bed can also mean an unnecessary extended hospital stay while another bed is located, costing the system more than necessary.

Reimbursing nursing facilities for holding beds, then, just makes sense and saves us money in other ways. The reimbursement should include the costs for direct care that the facility pays for the cost of staffing. The facility could not reduce staffing while that resident is gone, particularly since our workforce shortage is making it near impossible for facilities to hire new staff. Reducing staffing during a hospitalization might mean the facility would lose that worker entirely, and may not be able to get back up to required staffing levels to admit the resident back into the facility. We urge you to vote in support of LD 1197.

Thank you.

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