



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

**In support of  
LD 423 – An Act to Improve Access to Bariatric Care in Nursing  
Homes  
&  
LD 1386 – Resolve, To Improve Access to Bariatric Care**

**Delivered in writing on April 14, 2021**

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

My name is Jess Maurer and I'm the Executive Director of the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA). The MCOA is a broad, multidisciplinary network of over 100 organizations, businesses and older Mainers working together to make sure we 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 LDs 423 & 1386 because we recognize the significant challenges individuals with significant obesity face in care and placement both in hospitals and in nursing homes. People with this health condition require special accommodation in beds, modes of transportation, equipment, in staffing support, and various other supports to enable them to be cared for safely. Too frequently, people with this health condition are unable to be safely transferred to a nursing facility when they are otherwise ready for discharge from a hospital because there are few facilities that are prepared to provide safe and effective care for them.

These two bills recognize this need and offer effective solutions that begin to address this problem. People with significant obesity are as entitled to safe and effective care as every other person. By directing the Department of Health & Human Services to provide up to 16 new specialized bariatric nursing facility beds, these bills offer an important step toward a healthier, safer, and more caring environment for everyone affected by this illness.

We urge a vote in support of LDs 423 & 1386.  
Thank you.

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