

## LD 814: The Older Mainers Act

### Investing in a Maine Where We Can All Age Well

#### Bill Overview:

By expanding access to proven home and community-based services at Maine's Area Agencies on Aging, **LD 814 allows all of us to age in the place we choose and deliver significant savings to the state in long-term care and healthcare expenditures.**

- Annually, **Maine's Agencies on Aging provide critical services to support 53,000+ older Mainers** and Mainers living with disabilities stay in their homes and communities, yet their services cannot meet the growing population and need.

#### Bill Status:

**The Older Mainers Act (LD 814) currently sits on the Appropriations table.** LD 814 is a wise investment in Maine's future financial well-being and enables our oldest residents to age at home with dignity for years to come.

- The \$3M one-time funding in '25 is projected to serve 9,000+ Mainers with services such as Meals on Wheels and Medicare counseling, however **hundreds still remain on waitlists** and demand only continues to grow for programs that help older Mainers age in place.
- Sustaining the \$3M is critical in order to maintain services for thousands of older Mainers. However, **fully funding LD 814 at \$9.75M is a wise and necessary investment that would save the state millions of dollars for years to come.**

#### Why now?

**As our population ages, we have a chance as a state to invest in a future where we are all supported and can stay engaged and connected as we age.**

- Maine is the demographically oldest state in the nation with 23% of Mainers 65 and older. <sup>[1]</sup> **By 2030 it's expected that Maine will have 393,399 people 65+, a 36% increase from 2020.** <sup>[2]</sup>
- Older adults contribute billions annually through caregiving, work, and economic engagement, yet many face isolation, food insecurity, and other barriers to aging safely at home:
  - 52% of single older Mainers can't afford basic needs <sup>[3]</sup> and 25% of Mainers 65+ live alone <sup>[4]</sup>
  - 900+ older Mainers are on waitlists for services like Meals on Wheels and healthcare counseling, which are critical services to remaining at home <sup>[8]</sup>

## LD 814: A Cost-Saving Solution with Strong Return on Investment

The state can invest now to increase access to community-based services for Maine's fastest growing population and reduce future costs for nursing homes and long ER stays.

**The Older Mainers Act will pay for itself if the Agency on Aging services can keep just 103 older Mainers out of Medicaid-funded nursing homes for one year.**

### LD 814, a \$9.75M Investment = Statewide Impact and Savings

What the investment could do for older Mainers	Projected financial impact
Deliver an additional 336,837 Meals on Wheels to 1,316 new older Mainers, eliminating waitlists	Projected cost-saving to the state = \$7,490,000 annually <sup>[7]</sup>
Provide wrap-around navigation services to 1,100+ older Mainers	Projected cost-saving the state = \$3,400,000 annually <sup>[7]</sup>
Provide 1,300 more older Mainers with health insurance counseling and information	Projected cost-savings = \$3,600,000 in healthcare savings for individual Mainers annually <sup>[8]</sup>
Provide 225+ family caregivers with Respite4ME mini-grants	Pass \$1,125,000 directly to family caregivers <sup>[8]</sup>
Support a network of 1,500 dedicated AAA volunteers delivering services statewide	Impact value = \$3,578,260 annually in their donated service

**Annually, LD 814 is projected to save the state well over \$10.5 million and put \$4.75 million back into older Mainers' pockets**

### Legislators: How You Can Lead

- Champion LD 814:** Advocate with AFA and Caucus leaders for an investment in a future where we can all age where we want with dignity and support
- Visit Your Local AAA:** Join a Meals on Wheels ride-along or community lunch
- Connect Constituents:** Direct older Mainers to [AgeWiseMaine.org](http://AgeWiseMaine.org) for services
- Collaborate:** Reach out to Megan Walton, AgeWise Maine Board Chair at [mwalton@smaaa.org](mailto:mwalton@smaaa.org)

Sources: [1] America's Health Ranking 2023. [2] Maine Population Outlook, Office of the State Economist, Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services, 2023. [3] MOW Maine State Fact Sheet, 2024 [4] Maine State Plan on Aging Needs Assessment, Catherine Cutler Institute, 2024. [5] Closing the Gap: Maine's Direct Care Shortage and Solutions to Fix It, MECEP 2024. [6] Meals on Wheels America & WellSky Foundation, 2023. *The Case for Meals on Wheels: A Five-Year Study of 29,000 Recipients.* [7] Calculated based on Mon Ami Meals on Wheels Impact in Maine: Projected Cost Savings and Service Reach (2023). [8] AAA statewide estimate and data, 2023-2024.