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January 7, 2014

Senator Margaret Craven, Chair  
Representative Richard Farnsworth, Chair  
Committee on Health and Human Services  
#100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

**RE: LD 829, A Resolve to Complete the Timely and Appropriate Redesign of Shared Living Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities or Autism**

Dear Senator Craven, Representative Farnsworth, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am writing today to provide you with an update and progress report regarding LD 829, *A Resolve to Complete the Timely and Appropriate Redesign of Shared Living Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities or Autism*. Shared Living Services are offered under the Section 21 Home and Community Based Waiver Program within the MaineCare Benefits Manual.

The work outlined in LD 829 continues to be of significant value to the Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) and is currently underway. OADS convened a Shared Living Work Group in 2010 that includes stakeholders from the Maine Association of Community Service Providers (MACSP), Developmental Disability Council, Disability Rights Council (DRC), DHHS and a number of Shared Living providers. This workgroup was established to allow for collaborative efforts to occur surrounding the need to review, analyze and improve the Shared Living Program in its entirety.

The workgroup, through immense partnership, has made changes in the past year alone to the Shared Living Handbook, Shared Living training guidelines, and in our communications with the Department of Labor (DOL). This established workgroup is committed to further changes of the definition of "host" families and to the amendment of necessary MaineCare rules to allow for a clearer service definition.

The Department, at this time, believes that the work set forth in LD 829 is already being accomplished and is receiving the necessary attention that it deserves.

I hope that the above information is helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Mary C. Mayhew  
Commissioner