



Testimony Regarding LD 1317: An Act to Restore Services to Help Certain Noncitizens Meet Their Basic Needs

Brooklin Jones, University of Maine

I am writing to state my support for LD 1317, An Act to Restore Services to Help Certain Noncitizens Meet Their Basic Needs...

This bill removes limitations on food supplement program benefits and temporary assistance, such as SNAP and TANF, for immigrant, refugee, and asylum seeking families. Additionally, it would provide access to MaineCare coverage by altering the language for state-funded supplemental security income to maintain consistency throughout the law for refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seeking individuals, who are lawfully present in the United States or pursuing a lawful process to apply for immigration or refugee status (Maine Equal Justice Partners, 2019).

Under PL 96-212, The Refugee Act of 1980, enacted by congress in March 1980, refugees and immigrants are entitled to cash assistance, material goods, limited medical assistance, and other services (Refugee Act of 1980, 1980). The limited medical assistance is covered for their first year in the United States by the federal government (ibid). By restoring access to general assistance services and programs in Maine, lawful noncitizen individuals would be able to have services lawfully designated for them. Furthermore, under The Refugee Act of 1980, the cost incurred will be covered 100% by the federal government (Refugee Act of 1980, 1980).