

Nadeau, Karen

From: larryd@myfairpoint.net
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2020 9:06 AM
To: Nadeau, Karen
Subject: Statement for Basic Income Security committee for meeting on 10/15/20

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Basic Income Security Committee for Maine, 10/15/20

To members of the Maine Basic Income Security Committee:

The current pandemic Maine and the country are facing has brought into sharp focus the need for basic income security for every resident. The \$1,200 stimulus payment, increased unemployment benefits, and proposals for a second stimulus and other payments have clearly demonstrated the need for ongoing basic income security. The CARES Act has made a big impact, even though it is (so far) short term.

One-time or short term cash payments help, but only regular cash payments can maintain and strengthen the economy and all Maine communities. The Magnolia Mother's Trust in Jackson, MS, and other similar pilot projects have had a longer term positive impact on recipients. There has been, definitely is now, and will continue to be, uncertainty in the economy for years to come.

For too many, wages are simply too low to enable workers to get ahead, no matter how hard they work. Being able to save, buy a home, set aside money for children's education and other needs, or having enough for an emergency is simply not an option for probably more than half of all Maine people.

Many Mainers experience stress, which can cause domestic violence, parenting difficulties, mental health problems and substance use disorder, physical health issues, interactions with the criminal justice system, and other problems that cost the state large amounts of money.

Financial support on the front end can save the state hundreds of millions of dollars funding coping programs later on. The federal government has recognized that with its recent cash payments; the state should as well, on a more ongoing basis.

While financing of direct cash payments is a challenge, a first step for Maine, through its legislature-sponsored Basic Income Security Committee, can be to endorse the value and necessity of such payments, without immediately trying to fill in the details of such a program.

A second action the committee can take is to ask for funding (from the legislature, from

foundations, from the public, etc.) for (1) a large scale study to determine how direct cash payments can work, their long term impact, and how they can be funded; and (2) at least 2-3 pilot projects in the state that could provide those payments to every town resident (in a small, rural town), to specific neighborhoods, and/or to means tested individuals.

As a state of Maine resident, I am personally willing to help with both of these actions.

Sincerely,

Larry Dansinger
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