



Pass LD 1877 to move more Maine families beyond survival to long term economic stability!

LD 1877, An Act to Reduce the Number of Children Living in Deep Poverty in Maine, would ensure more parents and their kids can meet their everyday needs, and allow more Mainers to access the program in the first place.

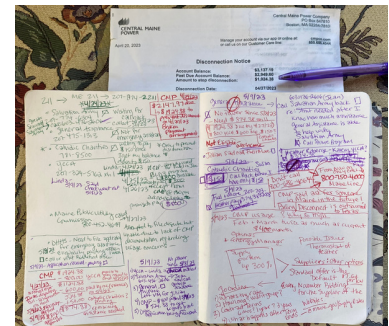
Families participating in Maine's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program **deserve dignity and their kids deserve bright futures**. TANF is supposed to provide monthly income support to them, and connect parents with training, education, and jobs to put economic security within reach. But Maine's maximum grant for a family of three is just \$665 per month (Sept. 2023), **the lowest grant of any New England state** and equal to less than 35% of the federal poverty level.

In Maine, recent data shows that 16,000 children-- 7% of our kids -- **are living in deep poverty**, meaning their families live on an average of less than \$14,000 per year (for a family of two adults and two children). The impacts of child poverty are far-reaching, including low academic achievement and trauma, and can affect physical, social, emotional, and behavioral development.

TANF could also reach more families in Maine

In 2020, **only one in five Maine kids in poverty** were getting monthly income support through TANF. By expanding eligibility to include more families living in poverty, Maine can **use federal funds** not only to help families meet their basic needs but also to make **more parents eligible for training and education** support.

For Maine's kids, communities, and economy to reach their potential, we must **invest more in families**. When families succeed, it has ripple effects in our schools, governments, and downtowns. Parents who have enough food in the fridge and a safe place to call home, and are able to meet their kids' needs-- providing clothing, shoes, school supplies, and more-- can **put more focus on training, education, and the future**.



A little more support for families would go a long way

"This is all of the documentation of two weeks worth calls...looking for help to prevent the disconnection of my electricity.

Living in poverty is about trying to prioritize the immediate need. It's a juggling act of trying to pay rent so one can avoid becoming homeless; feeding your family so they can be healthy; keeping the power on so daily life isn't interrupted; not running out of heating oil so you don't have to use electric heaters and end up with a \$400 electric bill...and so much more." -Genevieve, Kittery