

2009 AUG 31 PM 12:48

Mr. Grant Pennoyer
Director, Office of Fiscal and Program Review
2 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

August 31, 2009

Dear Grant,

Although I writing to you on my Maine Health Care Association letterhead, I am responding to your August 18th request for information on behalf of the Maine Hospice Council. I serve as the volunteer Treasurer for the Maine Hospice Council.

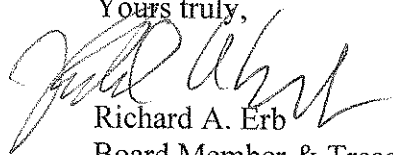
As you know, the Hospice Council receives a small amount of funding (less than \$40,000) each year through the State Budget. Much of that is distributed to the volunteer hospice programs throughout the state and a portion of it helps fund the operating expenses of the Hospice Council.

As a treasurer and board member, I can assure you that all funds received by the Council are necessary to fulfill its mission of improving end of life care for Maine residents. Faced with difficult financial issues of its own, MHC has downsized from five staff members to two and has relocated its office to achieve further savings. The remaining staff has made personal sacrifice to allow the work of the Council to continue. Hard decisions have already been made and further cuts would put the mission of the Council at risk.

Providing quality end of life care doesn't cost more money, but it does require an organization that will advocate for the cause and provide education to health care professionals and the general public. I would ask legislators to keep in mind how much benefit the people of Maine are receiving for a very small contribution.

Thank you.

Yours truly,



Richard A. Erb
Board Member & Treasurer
Maine Hospice Council