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Proposed rule changes sow confusion, child advocates say

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services has proposed changes to Medicaid's Section 28, which offers services to help children with life and social skills.

By **JOE LAWLOR**
Staff Writer

Child advocates say messaging from Maine officials around proposed rule changes to a Medicaid program that serves children with disabilities has sown confusion among nonprofits delivering the benefits.

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Advocates said the changes would restrict eligibility, making it harder for some children to obtain services that help with life and social skills. "It's a complete mess right now, and if these

rules go forward it's going to break the system," said Nancy Cronin, executive director of the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council.

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services has proposed rule changes to Medicaid's

Section 28, which offers services to help children with skills, such as how to order food at a restaurant, answer the phone, listen and interact with others. Cronin said the changes would result in children with certain diagnoses, such as atten-

tion deficit/hyperactivity disorder and cerebral palsy, becoming ineligible for services.

Laura Cordes, executive director of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers, a group

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WAR IN IRAN TRUMP ISSUES A FIERY THREAT

The president vowed to target infrastructure if the Gulf of Hormuz remained closed to US-linked business.

By **MATTHEW LEE, BASSEM MROUE, KONSTANTIN TOROPIN and SAMY MAGDY**
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday made expletive-laden new threats to escalate strikes on Iran and its infrastructure if it doesn't open the Strait of Hormuz by his deadline, after American forces rescued an aviator whose Iran-downed plane fell behind enemy lines.

A defiant Iran struck infrastructure targets in neighboring Gulf Arab countries, challenged the U.S. account of the rescue and threatened to restrict another heavily used waterway in the region, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait off the Arabian Peninsula.

In a social media post, Trump vowed to hit Iran's power plants and bridges and said the country would be "living in Hell" if the Strait of Hormuz, crucial for global trade, isn't opened by Tuesday. He ended with "Praise be to Allah."

Trump has issued such deadlines before but

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Easter gets prehistoric with DINOSAUR EGG HUNT



Rory Rojko, 4, of Burlington, Vt., reaches for an egg during the Dino Egg Hunt at the Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine on Sunday in Portland. (PHOTOS BY DEREK DAVIS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

Families line up to search for 'dino eggs' at the Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine on Sunday in Portland.

By **SOPHIE BURCHELL**
Staff Writer

On Easter Sunday at the Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine, it was the dinosaurs who had risen.

Hundreds of small children ran throughout the museum's three floors on the hunt for the thousand of "dinosaur eggs" hidden throughout the play structures, discovery tables and science displays.

The museum's annual Dino Egg Hunt is always popular, as evidenced this year by the hordes of children in their Easter best — and Easter pajamas — and the adults trailing after

them in bunny ears. Running Friday through Sunday, each two-hour hunt brought in more than 300 visitors, said Matt McDermit, the museum's director of marketing and communications.

Each child could collect up to 15 colorful plastic dinosaur eggs filled with candies, miniature dinosaur figurines, stamps and more tiny treasures.

Sierra Zitsch, of Auburn, brought her two sons. Her eldest, Mathieu, 7, helped 4-year-old Beau reach an egg that was perched three feet from the

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Beau Zitsch, 4, of Auburn, reaches for an egg perched atop an enlarged book cover of "Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat" by Javaka Steptoe, during the Dino Egg Hunt.

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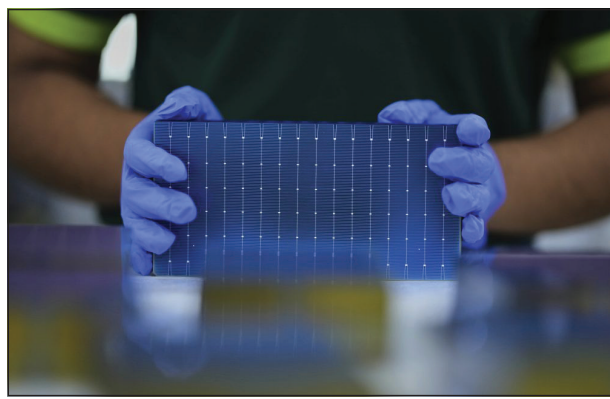
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Maine Trust for Local News

Plug-in solar could be coming to Maine thanks to this bill



A worker stacks single solar cells at a ReNew manufacturing plant on the outskirts of Jaipur, India. Supporters of Maine's LD 1730 argue that plug-in solar panels could offset a household's electricity usage and lower their monthly utility bills. (MANISH SWARUP/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Proponents argue that these small generators could lower electric bills for a relatively low upfront cost.

By **DANIEL KOOL**
Staff Writer

Mainers may soon be able to install small-scale, portable solar energy systems in their homes, under a bill backed by the Legislature on Thursday.

If signed into law, the measure, LD 1730, would allow electricity customers to use certain small solar generation and battery sys-

tems, which plug directly into wall sockets, similar to gas generators. Since they attach to a home's electrical system like any other appliance, these panels are also portable, meaning homeowners and renters can take them along when moving — unlike traditional solar systems, which are generally permanent.

The proposal comes as Mainers face steep electricity prices, driven largely by the cost of natural gas. It also comes as the American and Israeli conflict with Iran shakes global oil markets.

Proponents argue that

these small generators could offset a household's electricity usage and lower their monthly utility bills, all for a significantly lower upfront cost than larger-scale, more traditional solar systems.

Lawmakers have offered different estimations on exactly how much one of these systems could save a typical Maine household, but it could be hundreds of dollars per year.

Rep. Gerry Runte, D-York, said last month

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