



**Maine Medical
Association**



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
AND
THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION**

In Support Of

LD 239 An Act to Allow Retail Pharmacies to Operate Remote Dispensing Sites in Rural Areas

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Room 220, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine
Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services. My name is Anne Sedlack, and I am the Director of Advocacy for the Maine Medical Association. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 239 An Act to Allow Retail Pharmacies to Operate Remote Dispensing Sites in Rural Areas

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

The MMA and MOA's legislative committees have joined to advocate with one voice. We have all determined that testifying in support of LD 239.

In the past decade, a tenth of all pharmacies have closed in the State of Maine. This impact is felt the most in Maine's rural communities, where the decline has been steeper, with some counties losing a fifth of their pharmacies in the same timeframe. Washington County has experienced the most hardship, with a 31% decline in the number of open pharmacies, and only 16% of the county's population lives within 15 min of a pharmacy. Other countries are also facing difficulties. Waldo, Somerset, Oxford,

Sagadahoc, and York counties have the fewest pharmacies per capita, ranging from 1.3 to 1.6 per 10,000 people.

Our members are deeply concerned about their patients' access to medications in these rural, less-serviced areas of the state. While mail-order pharmacies have made a significant contribution in ensuring chronic medications are available to people in these communities, they still lack access to acute medications such as antibiotics that are not easily accessible and where delaying taking them could cause significant injury or worsening of the disease.

For these reasons, we support LD 239 and the establishment of remote dispensing sites in rural areas of Maine. We would love to be included in the rulemaking process.

Thank you for considering the thoughts of Maine's physicians, and we hope you support LD 239.

Thank you,

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