

February 4, 2025

Senator Donna Bailey, Chair  
Representative Kristi Mathieson, Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

**RE: Testimony in SUPPORT of LD 178, An Act Regarding Coverage for Step Therapy for Advanced Metastatic Cancer.**

Dear Chair Bailey, Chair Mathieson, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

On behalf of more than 4,000 registered nurses and health care professionals providing patient care in our state, the **Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee/ National Nurses United (MSNA) urges the Committee to support LD 178, An Act Regarding Coverage for Step Therapy for Advanced Metastatic Cancer.**

**Insurance companies use step therapy to delay and deny the best care for an individual patient.** Step therapy requirements are boilerplate checklists that require a patient to try and fail at a series of cheaper treatments before they are allowed to access the care that their treating health care professional recommends. Patients with the same diagnosis have unique needs and different responses to treatments. A patient's treating health care professionals, in consultation with the patient, are the only people in a position to determine what treatment is clinically appropriate. Step therapy requirements disrupt patient care and waste health care professionals' time jumping through insurance company hoops before they are allowed to provide the care their patients need.

**Metastatic cancer patients may die while waiting for their insurers to allow effective treatment.** Metastatic cancer is the most advanced form of cancer. It can take months for a patient to go through all the cheaper options before their insurance company allows them the treatments that work. Metastatic cancer patients do not have months to waste. One study found a median survival time of 10 months for metastatic cancer patients.<sup>1</sup> Getting the right treatment at the right time can make a significant difference in the quality of a cancer patient's life.

Nurses are tired of watching patients suffer and die because insurance companies put profits before patients. **We strongly urge you to support LD 178.**

Sincerely,



Coralie (Cokie) Giles, RN  
President, Maine State Nurses Association  
Vice-President, National Nurses United

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<sup>i</sup> Mani, K., Deng, D., Lin, C. et al. Causes of death among people living with metastatic cancer. *Nat Commun* 15, 1519 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-024-45307-x>.