

Testimony of Claire Mortimer Nurse Practitioner FNP MSN
In SUPPORT of LD 582
An Act to Require Health Insurance Carriers to Provide Coverage for Blood Testing for
Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances

Before the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee
March 4th, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Claire Mortimer. I have practiced medicine as a nurse practitioner for 43 years. I have a private medical practice in Blue Hill.

Please accept this testimony in support of LD 582, which would clarify that insurance companies must cover the full cost of the PFAS blood serum bill as an Essential Health Benefit addressing preventative care and chronic disease management.

Toxic per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) or “forever chemicals” are used in thousands of everyday products and manufacturing processes.

PFAS pose significant health risks, including kidney cancer, elevated cholesterol, reduced infant birthweight, and more. Evolving science indicates that PFAS is also linked with a longer list of diseases including breast cancer and testicular cancer. Children, low income communities, tribal, and rural communities are disproportionately impacted and more susceptible to health and financial impacts of PFAS contamination.

PFAS exposure in Maine is widespread. Maine has identified at least **82 farms with documented PFAS contamination** and over **600 private drinking wells in 22 Maine towns** contaminated above the state’s interim safe drinking water standard. The AFFF spill in Brunswick demonstrated that serious PFAS contamination extends beyond sludge sites.

Early data indicated that at least 25 Maine schools and daycare facilities had water supplies above Maine’s interim drinking water standard of 20 parts per trillion, suggesting that 6,650 children and young adults currently enrolled at those schools had been exposed to high levels of PFAS while at school. There were 43 impacted schools and a total of 9550 children exposed above EPA’s draft drinking water standards, which are lower than Maine’s regulation. The total number of previously exposed alumni from these impacted schools would be difficult to calculate.

I live in Brooklin. The Brooklin School has had water contaminated with PFAS for many years. Schoolchildren in my town can not drink the water in the school because it is unsafe and contaminated with PFAS.

What little we know about PFAS contamination in Maine is likely the tip of the iceberg.

The National Academy of Sciences Engineering and Medicine recommends PFAS blood serum tests for at-risk populations including communities with documented exposure, people living near farms where sludge may have been spread, people with an occupational exposure risk including firefighters and people living near landfills, incinerators, airports, and military bases.

Many private Maine insurers leave patients to cover the full cost of the blood test unless the deductible has been reached. The \$600 per person cost of the serum test is currently preventing PFAS impacted Mainers from assessing their exposure.

Treatment for PFAS exposure begins with assessing the patient's level of exposure. High level exposure triggers regular screening to allow for early detection and treatment of PFAS linked diseases. The assessment of exposure can help impacted families make lifestyle changes to prevent future exposure. **The blood serum test is necessary to help assess level of exposure.**

LD 532 is not a new mandate, it only clarifies an existing mandate. Under current state and federal law, insurers must cover the full cost of a list of 10 Essential Health Benefits including preventative health care and chronic disease management. The PFAS blood serum test is essential to accessing both preventative care and chronic disease management since it allows clinicians to identify and manage risk.

State and federal law already require insurers to cover the cost of preventative care and chronic disease management. This bill clarifies that the PFAS blood serum test fits into that category.

I urge you to vote unanimously "Ought to Pass" on LD 582.

Thank you,

Claire Mortimer, Family Nurse Practitioner-board certified, MSN
Many Paths to Healing, LLC in Blue Hill, Maine
Resident of Brooklin, Maine

Claire Mortimer
Brooklin
LD 582

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