

Testimony of Lawrence Higgins from Fairfield, Maine

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 Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee. My name is Lawrence Higgins. I am one of the leaders of the community group known as the Fairfield Water Concerned Citizens. 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 preventive care and chronic disease management.

Insurance companies MUST understand that discovering early stages of any health issues caused from the contamination of PFAS in your blood would save not only lives but millions of dollars in savings for the Health Insurance companies. A lot of families just cannot afford the high cost of these tests.

My wife and I have extremely high PFAS contamination in our blood from having PFAS in our well water and chicken eggs for the past 30 years. There isn't a day that goes by that we don't think and wonder when our bodies are going to shut down on us.

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. They have discovered PFAS in a lot of our school drinking water. I feel that everyone needs to have their blood tested for PFAS. Once people know that they have an unsafe exposure, they can make lifestyle changes to avoid further contact with the chemicals and also get screened and treated for PFAS linked illnesses. Accessing a PFAS blood serum test is key to preventing early detection and/or management of PFAS linked illnesses including chronic illnesses.

State and Federal Law already require insurers to cover the cost of preventive care and chronic disease management. This bill clarifies that the PFAS blood serum bill fits into that category. There is clear testing guidance for physicians from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine which allows clinicians to work with impacted patients setting up treatment and monitoring guidelines. But patients must be able to access the PFAS blood serum test in order to work with their doctors on a treatment plan.

I urge you to vote unanimously "Ought to PASS" on LD582

Thank You for your me

Lawrence Higgins

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Fairfield Water Concerned Citizens