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Commissioner



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3/4/2025

Senator Ingwersen, Chair  
Representative Meyer, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 167—*An Act to Provide 2 Hearing Aids to MaineCare Members with Diagnosed Hearing Loss*

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information neither for nor against LD 167, *An Act to Provide 2 Hearing Aids to MaineCare Members with Diagnosed Hearing Loss*.

This bill requires the MaineCare program to provide reimbursement for a hearing aid for each hearing-impaired ear of an individual enrolled in the MaineCare program. Under current law, the MaineCare program provides reimbursement for a hearing aid for one hearing-impaired ear of an individual enrolled in the MaineCare program, with additional requirements as established by rule for coverage of a hearing aid for the 2nd hearing impaired ear.

Assuming correct understanding of the bill's intent, passage of this bill would increase costs as all adult MaineCare members who meet MaineCare's requirements related to severity of hearing loss would be eligible to receive two hearing aids. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (the "Department") is not aware of issues surrounding the current coverage of hearing aids, however, is not opposed to the bill however, additional funding would be required to expand coverage. This increase in coverage is will cost \$321,325 in fiscal year (FY) 2025 and \$337,391 for each subsequent FY, including \$102,946 and \$108,093 of general funds respectively.

Should LD 167 move forward and coverage of hearing aids increase to two per member, the Department will be required to request the necessary state plan amendments from the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and adopt routine technical rules upon federal approval.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Probert".

Michelle Probert  
Director  
Office of MaineCare Services  
Maine Department of Health and Human Services