

State of Maine | 132nd Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Testimony of Hannah Hudson on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
March 24, 2025

Supporting:

LD 1028 “Resolve, to Establish the Task Force to Study Equitable Access to Maternal Health Care and Birthing Facilities”

Sponsored by Senator Talbot Ross

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Hannah Hudson, the Director of Policy at the Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA). MPCA is a membership organization that represents Maine's Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine's FQHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality, accessible and affordable primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 100 service delivery sites across the state.

We have seen a decline in access to maternal health care and birthing facilities across our state. As demonstrated by a News Center Maine report from February 2025¹, this has had a negative impact on rural communities served by FQHCs.

MPCA supports of the establishment of the Task Force to Study Equitable Access to Maternal Health Care and Birthing Facilities, which is directed to study past closures of maternal health care centers in the state, the current availability of access to maternal health care services in the state and methods to increase patient access to maternal health care services. We appreciate the inclusion of a task force member that represents a FQHC as these organizations continue to help fill gaps in maternal health.

In 2024, the National Association of Community Health Centers found that FQHCs play a critical role in the elimination of preventable deaths and near miss events, the reduction of emergency and acute care events, and improve population level maternal health (managing complications and pre-existing or pregnancy-induced conditions).² The Maine Primary Care Association also supports training and technical assistance (T/TA) aimed at improving maternal health outcomes for FQHC patients.

MPCA and Maine's FQHCs would be happy to provide additional information as needed. Thank you for your consideration of our comments, and please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any follow up questions.

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¹ [Birthing unit closures are hitting Maine's rural areas particularly hard](#), News Center Maine, 2/23/25

² [The Health Center Advantage for Maternal Health](#), NACHC, March 2024