

Testimony of Whitney A. Parrish Perry
American Heart Association
LD 1070, “Resolve, to Study a Medicaid Forward Plan”

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

My name is Whitney Parrish Perry, and I am the Maine Government Relations Director of the American Heart Association. The American Heart Association (AHA) is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, whose mission is to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. I am testifying in support of LD 1070, “*Resolve, to Study a Medicaid Forward Plan.*” Thank you to Senator Tipping for introducing this legislation.

Everyone should have comprehensive, understandable, and affordable health coverage. Everyone should receive high-quality, affordable, patient-centered health care. Everyone should have access to evidence-based preventive services at minimal cost. We believe that all Maine people, no matter where they come from or how much money they make, should have access to affordable health care and should be able to see a medical provider when they need to. That is why the American Heart Association supports the study of a Medicaid Forward plan, which would leverage the state-federal Medicaid (MaineCare) partnership to create a public, universal health care plan for all Mainers.

We know that Mainers want, and need, more health care, as evidenced by the overwhelming support of Medicaid expansion in the 2017 statewide ballot measure. Directing the Office of Affordable Health Care to (1) study the implementation impact of a Maine-based Medicaid Forward plan and (2) propose a plan that would work for our state and its residents are important first steps to reaching the goal of universal coverage.

We know that when we ignore health care needs today, whether due to coverage availability or cost, people face preventable illness and unnecessary suffering, and it increases health care costs for our whole health care system. Medicaid expansion makes us all healthier and stronger. We urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1070.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about this testimony, or at the email address provided below.

Sincerely,

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