



April 24, 2025

Greeting Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and honorable members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

My name is Dr. Leigh Forbush. I own and operate the Osteopathic Center for Family Medicine in Hampden, ME, and I have been a practicing physician, providing full-spectrum care to patients of all ages, for the past 20 years. I am here to speak in support of **LD 1496, An Act to Ensure Ongoing Access to Medications and Care for Chronic Conditions and Conditions Requiring Long-term Care by Changing Requirements for Prior Authorizations.**

Prior authorizations, while designed with cost control in mind, have evolved into significant obstacles to timely and appropriate care. For patients with chronic conditions requiring long-term treatment, the current system creates unnecessary and potentially dangerous disruptions in care.

In my experience, I've witnessed how prior authorization requirements cause significant delays in essential treatments. These delays don't just represent an inconvenience—they can lead to disease progression, complications, and ultimately poorer health outcomes. For chronic conditions where medication adherence is crucial, these interruptions can be particularly harmful.

The administrative burden imposed by frequent reauthorization requirements diverts valuable healthcare resources away from patient care. Healthcare providers report spending hours each week completing paperwork and communicating with insurers—time that could be better spent treating patients. This administrative overload contributes significantly to provider burnout and dissatisfaction.

Perhaps most concerning is how prior authorization requirements can override clinical judgment. Healthcare providers prescribe specific treatments based on their expertise, patient history, and individual needs. When these clinical decisions are questioned or denied through administrative processes, it undermines the provider-patient relationship and the quality of care delivered.

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The proposed legislation addresses these issues directly by:

1. Ensuring prior authorizations remain valid for the duration of treatment or one year (whichever is longer)
2. Limiting reauthorization frequency to once every 5 years for necessary long-term treatments
3. Prohibiting coverage restrictions for previously approved treatments within 90 days of enrollment in a new plan
4. Requiring 90 days' notice before restricting coverage of previously approved services

These changes would provide much-needed stability and continuity of care for patients with chronic conditions. By reducing unnecessary administrative hurdles, the bill would allow healthcare providers to focus on what matters most—providing quality care to their patients.

I urge this committee to support LD 1496 and take this important step toward a more patient-centered healthcare system in Maine. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leigh Forbush", with a large, stylized initial "L" and "F".

Leigh Forbush, DO