



**Maine Medical
Association**



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
AND
THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION**

In Support Of

**LD 1497- An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Primary Care Reporting by the Maine
Quality Forum and to Establish the Primary Care Advisory Council**

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services
Room 220, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine
Tuesday, April 22nd, 2025

Good Afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services. My name is Kendra Paradis, DO, and I am a Family Medicine Physician. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1497- An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Primary Care Reporting by the Maine Quality Forum and to Establish the Primary Care Advisory Council on behalf of the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

The MMA and MOA's legislative committees have joined to advocate with one voice in support of LD 1497.

As physicians, we are very aware of how foundational primary care is to the field of medicine. It often provides our patients' first point of contact, offers ongoing care, and focuses on the important issues of prevention and early intervention. We also know, both through studies and clinical experience, that primary care is associated with better health outcomes, lower healthcare costs, and greater equity in healthcare access.¹ This shows that primary care is a critical part of our healthcare system that cannot be allowed to fail.

¹ Starfield B, Shi L, Macinko J. Contribution of primary care to health systems and health. *Milbank Q.* 2005;83(3):457-502. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0009.2005.00409.x

Despite its obvious benefits, the primary care system has been neglected and chronically underinvested in by the healthcare system.² This has led to the system becoming increasingly strained in Maine and around the country due to challenges such as physician shortages, recruitment problems, and many others. LD 1497 seeks to address some of these challenges and create viable strategies for the future.

First, the bill improves transparency by establishing annual reporting by the Maine Quality Forum. This reporting will give the medical community and policymakers essential insight into key areas, including access to care, primary care workforce capacity, and investment levels. This clear and consistent data will help guide more effective decision-making and allow us to track progress over time.

Second, the bill establishes a Primary Care Advisory Council, a multidisciplinary group tasked with assessing the current state of primary care and recommending strategies to create a sustainable, high-functioning primary care system in the State. This new council will include physicians, consumer representatives, state leaders, and others. The council's diverse structure ensures an informed approach to addressing gaps in care and developing policies that improve access and quality of primary care for all Maine people.

If enacted, the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association are ready to support and contribute to the work of the Primary Care Advisory Council.

Thank you for considering the thoughts of Maine's physicians on LD 1497. We urge you to support this bill.

Thank you,

Kendra Paradis, DO

² Jabbarpour Y, Jetty A, Byun H, Siddiqi A, Park J. The Health of US Primary Care 2025 Scorecard--The Cost of Neglect How Chronic Underinvestment in Primary Care Is Failing US Patients. Milbank Memorial Fund and The Physicians Foundation. February 18, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1599/mmf.2025.0218>.