



Facing Hereditary Cancer **EMPOWERED**

April 25, 2025

Re: Proponent LD 1502 (HP 986)

Dear Chairwoman Bailey, Chairwoman Gramlich, Ranking Minority Member Foley and Esteemed Members of the Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

On behalf of FORCE (Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered), a national nonprofit organization that represents families facing hereditary cancers and our Maine constituents, I am writing to ask for your support of LD 1502 (HP 986).

This legislation would facilitate access to the guideline-recommended Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) cancer screenings that Maine men need, without out-of-pocket costs. A PSA test is a simple blood draw that alerts a physician if there are increased levels of the PSA protein, which may indicate the presence of prostate cancer. LD 1502 (HP 986) is a critical step towards ensuring that no one forgoes this potentially lifesaving cancer screening due to cost.

The majority of people in the FORCE community carry an inherited genetic mutation that significantly increases their risk of cancers including breast, ovarian, prostate, pancreatic and colorectal. National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines recommend that individuals at high risk of prostate cancer begin annual PSA testing at age 40, yet health insurers are not required to cover this test.

- **1 in 8** American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime.
- Every **2 minutes**, a person is diagnosed with prostate cancer in America.
- Men with at least one close family member with prostate cancer are at least **2x** the risk for prostate cancer; risk increases with each affected family member.
- Black men are **1.8x** more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and **2.2x** more likely to die from the disease.
- Men with certain inherited genetic mutations such as BRCA2, face up to a **60%** lifetime risk of prostate cancer versus a 12% risk for the average man.

Studies show that even the smallest amount of cost-sharing (out-of-pocket costs such as copays or coinsurance) is a barrier to care. Access to PSA screening is vital since prostate cancer has nearly a 100% survival rate and is significantly less expensive to treat when diagnosed at stage 1. At later stages, not only does the cost to treat prostate cancer increase but the survival rate plummets to 30% or lower.

We must ensure that men in Maine have access to PSA screening and increase access with your strong support of LD 1502 (HP 986).

Sincerely,

Lisa Peabody
Advocacy Manager