



**Maine Medical
Association**



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

In Support Of

**LD 1738 An Act to Establish the Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program to Support
Public Health Efforts in the State**

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Room 209, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine
Monday, April 28, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Anne Sedlack, and I am the Director of Advocacy at the Maine Medical Association. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1738, An Act to Establish the Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program to Support Public Health Efforts in the State, on behalf of the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing over 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. We have all determined we should testify in support of LD 1738.

This bill addresses an urgent and growing public health need, the safe disposal of hypodermic apparatuses in Maine communities. Improperly discarded syringes can be hazardous to many different groups, including sanitation workers, emergency responders, and the public, including children and other vulnerable populations. However, as we have testified in the past, restricting access to needles is also not the solution.

By creating a dedicated grant program, LD 1738 takes a community-centered approach to this issue. The Biohazard Waste Disposal Grant Program will ensure that resources are directed where needed most. The program will support community-based organizations, including certified needle exchange programs, to implement evidence-based strategies for safe collection and permanent disposal of hypodermic apparatuses. The bill also ensures that funding will be prioritized for areas with a documented increase in calls for service regarding improperly discarded hypodermic apparatuses. This ensures that the funding will go where it is needed most.

This bill is not just about managing waste; it's about protecting public health and promoting safety. By empowering local organizations to help with this rising public health need, LD 1738 gives them the tools and flexibility they need to respond to very real risks with effective, locally tailored solutions.

Thank you for considering the thoughts of Maine's physicians, and we hope you support LD 1738.

Thank you,

Anne Sedlack, Esq., M.S.W. (she/her/hers)

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