



April 28, 2025

The Honorable Donna Bailey  
Senate Chair

The Honorable Kristi Michele Mathieson  
House Chair

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
Maine State Legislature  
3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Submitted via email: <https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>

**RE: LD 1687- An Act to Clarify and Increase Access to HIV Prevention Medications (Support)**

Dear Senator Bailey and Representative Mathieson:

ViiV Healthcare Company (ViiV) strongly supports LD 1687,<sup>1</sup> a legislative proposal that builds upon the landmark 2021 bill, "An Act To Improve Access to HIV Prevention Medications" (S.P. 378 - LD 1115)<sup>2</sup>—a pivotal bill that was signed into law by Governor Janet Mills on June 21, 2021, and marked a significant step forward in making HIV preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) more widely available to Maine residents who could benefit from PrEP.

Specifically, ViiV supports:

- Requirements for MaineCare and commercial carriers to provide reimbursement to pharmacists to dispense, administer, and provide ancillary services for oral and long-acting injectable (LAI) PrEP equal to physicians.
- The classification of each LAI drug with a different duration as a separate method of administration.

ViiV is the only independent, global specialist company devoted exclusively to delivering advancements in human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) treatment and prevention to support the needs of people with HIV and those vulnerable to HIV. From its inception in 2009, ViiV has had a singular focus to improve the health and quality of life of people affected by this disease and has worked to address significant gaps and unmet needs in HIV care. In collaboration with the HIV community, ViiV remains committed to developing meaningful treatment advances,

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<sup>1</sup> Maine HP 1122 – An Act to Clarify and Increase Access to HIV Prevention Medications.  
<https://ldc.mainelegislature.org/Open/LDs/132/132-LD-1687.pdf>. Accessed April 25, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Maine LD 1115 – An Act To Improve Access to HIV Prevention Medications.  
<https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0378&item=4&snum=130>. Accessed April 25, 2025.

improving access to its HIV medicines, and supporting the HIV community to facilitate enhanced care and treatment.

ViiV applauds the Honored Members of the Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee for addressing gaps in LD 1115 (2021) that have impeded the implementation of the law and its public health potential and for recognizing the critical role that pharmacists play in the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative.

### **ViiV supports required coverage of HIV prevention services provided by pharmacists**

ViiV supports the requirement for MaineCare and commercial carriers to reimburse pharmacists at the same rate as physicians for HIV PrEP and ancillary services. Pharmacists are significantly more accessible than other primary care providers, particularly for individuals who could benefit from PrEP. In fact, 90% of the US population lives within 5 miles of a commercial pharmacy.<sup>3</sup> Reimbursing and authorizing pharmacists to dispense and administer PrEP in commercial pharmacy settings, where 85% of PrEP prescriptions are filled, can help address PrEP underutilization and improve progress toward ending the HIV epidemic in Maine.<sup>4</sup>

One measure for identifying gaps in PrEP uptake is the PrEP-to-Need Ratio (PnR), which is a ratio of the number of people using PrEP compared to people newly diagnosed with HIV. In 2023, Maine had a PnR of 30.3 which is comparatively high compared to other states; however, Maine's PnR is considerably lower for Black people than white people.<sup>5</sup> Adequate reimbursement rates will put pharmacists on par with other providers providing PrEP services while expanding access for the community.

### **ViiV strongly supports classifying each LAI drug with a different duration as a separate method of administration**

ViiV supports considering each LAI PrEP with different durations of therapy as a “separate method of administration.” This would allow for health care providers and PrEP users to determine the most suitable LAI option for each individual based on their needs. Without this clause, an individual could be forced to use an LAI option that is not the best for them or to switch LAI PrEP if they switch carriers.

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<sup>3</sup> Strand MA, Bratberg J, Eukel H, Hardy M, Williams C. Community pharmacists' contributions to disease management during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Prev Chronic Dis.* 2020 Jul 23;17:E69. Accessible at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32701431/>.

<sup>4</sup> Zhao A, Dangerfield DT 2nd, Nunn A, Patel R, Farley JE, Ugoji CC, Dean LT. Pharmacy-based interventions to increase use of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in the United States: a scoping review, 2022. *AIDS Behav.* 2022 May;26(5):1377-1392. Accessible at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34669062/>.

<sup>5</sup> AIDSVu. Location Profiles: Prevention & Testing in Maine. <https://map.aidsvu.org/profiles/state/maine/prevention-and-testing#1-1-PrEP>. Accessed April 23, 2025.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please feel free to contact me at [steve.f.novis@viivhealthcare.com](mailto:steve.f.novis@viivhealthcare.com) with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Novis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Novis".

Stephen Novis  
Northeast Region Government Relations Director,  
ViiV Healthcare