



**Testimony of Marge Kilkelly on Behalf of  
the Maine Council on Aging to the  
Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance  
and Financial Services.**

**In Favor of LD 1687 An Act to Clarify and Increase  
Access to HIV Prevention Medications**

Submitted May 1, 2025

Thank you Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services.

My name is Marge Kilkelly, and I am a Policy Consultant for the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA) which is a broad, multidisciplinary network of over 140 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and older community members working to ensure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age at home and in community settings. The MCOA is a unifying force across sectors that is creating a new narrative about aging and older people in Maine with the goal of building local, statewide, and national support for the systemic changes needed to support our new longevity.

**I am testifying in Favor of LD 1687 An Act to Clarify and Increase Access to HIV Prevention Medications.**

HIV is a preventable disease. There are no gender, race, or age limits to be exposed to HIV. Testing and access to medications should be readily available to everyone.

Despite common misconceptions, sexual activity among older people is an important part of their health and well-being. In an AARP Healthy Aging Poll of individuals 65-80 more than 50% indicated that sex was important to their quality of life. Older people now have dating apps geared to them. In spite of those realities, routine health care for older people often does not include a conversation about current or past sexual activity and potential exposure to HIV or other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). Sexual health is a part of health care often overlooked in older populations.

There are transmission and diagnostic factors that are unique to older people.

- Older people are less likely to use condoms as there is no pregnancy risk, however this increases the risk of transmission.
- Vaginal dryness can make women more susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.
- Signs of HIV may be mistaken for symptoms of aging or of age-related conditions. Consequently, testing to diagnose the condition may not include HIV testing.

Only 19% of individuals aged 65 and older had ever been tested for HIV in 2022. When people are not tested and do not know they have HIV they can spread the virus.

From the Healthy Aging Data Report, “the rate of adults 65+ with HIV/AIDS increased from 0.09% in 2014–2015 to 0.17% in 2020–2021” Those aged 55-64 comprised the largest share (27%) of people living with HIV, followed by those 65 and older.

HIV is more likely to be diagnosed at an advanced stage in many older people. According to an HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report from CDC, in 2021, 34% of people aged 55 and older in the U.S. already had late-stage HIV (AIDS) when they received a diagnosis. That is, they received a diagnosis later in the course of their disease, which impacts their quality of life.

Increasing access to testing and treatment reduces disease spread. Creating improved access to HIV prevention drugs is a huge step in the right direction for people of all ages.

I urge your support of LD 1687.