

State of Maine | 132nd Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Testimony of Hannah Hudson on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
May 2, 2025

Supporting:
LD 1677, “An Act to Establish the Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias Prevention and Support Program”
Sponsored by Representative Shagoury

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Hannah Hudson, Director of Policy at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

MPCA is a membership organization that represents Maine’s Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine’s CHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality and accessible primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 100 service delivery sites in all 16 Maine counties.

We support LD 1677, which would codify the Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias Prevention and Support Program and the Healthy Brain Initiative Council within the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. We would like to thank Representative Shagoury and the co-sponsors for bringing this legislation forward.

This bill is a timely and strategic next step for Maine. In 2011, Maine was one of the first states to create a State Alzheimer’s Plan. In 2019, thanks to federal funding through the CDC’s BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer’s Act, championed by Maine Senator Susan Collins, Maine further laid the groundwork for a robust, evidence-based response to Alzheimer’s and related dementias. The Maine Alzheimer’s Prevention Program and the Healthy Brain Initiative Stakeholder Group have been operating since 2019, conducting a statewide needs assessment, updating the State Plan, and mobilizing community partners across access to care, caregiver support, public awareness, workforce training, and legal and data issues.

However, without legislative action, these efforts remain vulnerable to changes in administration or funding cycles. LD 1677 ensures long-term accountability, strategic oversight, and bipartisan engagement by establishing a permanent council structure and requiring a State Plan to be updated every five years. Maine is currently the only New England state without a permanent infrastructure for addressing Alzheimer’s and related dementias, even though dementia is one of our fastest-growing public health challenges. Our CHCs increasingly serve patients and caregivers navigating complex needs associated with cognitive decline, limited access to memory care, and overwhelmed family support systems.

Codifying this program ensures we aren’t starting from scratch each time we face these challenges. It also positions Maine to remain competitive for federal grants, strengthen cross-sector partnerships, and deliver coordinated, person-centered care across our health system.

This bill builds on what is already working and ensures Maine has the tools, accountability, and infrastructure to address the growing burden of Alzheimer's for years to come. On behalf of Maine's Community Health Centers, thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at hhudson@mepca.org with any follow up questions.

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