



**Consumers for  
Affordable  
Health Care**

Advocating the right to quality,  
affordable health care for all Mainers.

mainecahc.org

PO Box 2490  
Augusta ME 04338

1-800-965-7476

**Testimony in opposition to  
LD 1707, An Act to Require a Person to Be a United States Citizen  
to Receive State or Local Financial Assistance and  
to Ensure Municipal Compliance with Federal Immigration Laws  
May 2, 2025**

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Jakob Giron. I am a Policy Advocate with Consumers for Affordable Health Care. I submit this testimony in opposition to LD 1707, An Act to Require a Person to Be a United States Citizen to Receive State or Local Financial Assistance and to Ensure Municipal Compliance with Federal Immigration Laws.

CAHC is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that advocates the right to quality, affordable health care for every person in Maine. CAHC serves as Maine's Health Insurance Consumer Assistance Program (CAP), which operates a toll-free HelpLine. In 2024, the HelpLine fielded over 7,200 calls and emails from people across Maine who needed help obtaining, keeping, using, or fixing problems with private health insurance or with accessing or affording health care services. CAHC also serves as the Ombudsman program for Maine's Medicaid program, MaineCare, and helps people apply for and navigate the enrollment process. It is with that background that we provide these comments.

LD 1707 proposes to prohibit noncitizens from receiving any form of financial assistance from the State or a municipality. Further, the proposed bill would prohibit a municipality from receiving municipal general assistance and state-municipal revenue sharing if that municipality restricts the exchange of information with federal immigration authorities or any other federal, state or local government entity regarding the citizenship or immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of any individual.

We believe the proposed bill undermines present laws concerning noncitizen eligibility for public benefits and disregards contributions by immigrants to Maine's economy. We also believe this bill would unnecessarily create an additional burden to Maine's health care infrastructure, particularly hospitals. Consequently, we believe LD 1707 runs counter to the public's interest in three ways.

First, the bill puts health care coverage for children and pregnant people who currently receive coverage through the State Medicaid Program at risk. Yet access to health care has demonstrable benefits to individuals and communities. As KFF reported in 2024, people

with health coverage are more likely to access medical and dental care, obtain essential prenatal care, and have healthier newborns.<sup>1</sup>

Second, LD 1707 could jeopardize state reimbursement to municipalities and its use of General Assistance provided to noncitizens. As you are likely aware, General Assistance serves as a last resort safety net program that helps individuals and families meet basic needs, including helping food, housing, utilities and certain medical expenses, such as prescriptions and medical supplies.

Third, LD 1707 could create an additional burden to Maine's health care infrastructure, particularly hospitals. People with limited resources who are not eligible for health coverage or resources such as General Assistance are more likely to end up in hospital emergency rooms. Federal law requires hospitals that participate in Medicare to provide emergency medical care to any patient, regardless of their ability to pay. Patients, including immigrant patients, must be given an initial screening. If they are found to be in need of emergency treatment, they must be treated until stable.<sup>2</sup>

CAHC is concerned that if safety net programs such as General Assistance become more limited, people who may need to rely on it to help pay for medications, for example, will become ill unnecessarily. Then, their only option might be to appear in a hospital emergency department to receive care to stabilize their condition. Without access to the medication they need, however, they may become ill again and need to return to the hospital. This situation would place a financial and capacity strain on hospitals unnecessarily.

A national study on the economic contributions of people who have immigrated to the U.S. showed that undocumented immigrants in Maine paid \$15.6 million in state and local taxes during 2022.<sup>3</sup> The value immigrants have to Maine's economy, including paying taxes that help to support public programs, cannot be overstated.

We urge you not to support LD 1707.

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<sup>1</sup> [KFF, State Health Coverage for Immigrants and Implications for Health Coverage and Care.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Undocumented Immigrants in the United States: U.S. Health Policy and Access to Care | Undocumented Immigrants and Health Care Access in the United States](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Study: Undocumented Immigrants Contribute Nearly \\$100 Billion in Taxes a Year – ITEP](#)