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Commissioner



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5/1/2025

Senator Bailey, Chair
Representative Mathieson, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 890 – *An Act to Permit the Dispensing of Ivermectin Pursuant to a Standing Order upon Request for COVID-19, Flu and Cancer Patients*

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide information in opposition to LD 890, *An Act to Permit the Dispensing of Ivermectin Pursuant to a Standing Order upon Request for COVID-19, Flu and Cancer Patients*.

This bill authorizes a pharmacist to dispense ivermectin upon request of a patient pursuant to a standing order from a practitioner, specifically for treatment of COVID-19, influenza or cancer. Additionally, the bill authorizes the Board of Pharmacy to adopt rules to implement the bill's requirements, including any documentation or other requirements established by the board when dispensing ivermectin. It is unknown what problem this bill seeks to address.

This bill expands pharmacist scope of practice to allow dispensing ivermectin with no requirement for a prescription from the person's health care provider, and no requirement for an evaluation to determine that this treatment is appropriate. The bill deems this practice of dispensing as acceptable and shields pharmacists from liability, though ivermectin is not a recommended treatment for COVID-19. Making these medications available to the public without appropriate controls will result in increased risk of harm. In 2021, when use of ivermectin increased for perceived benefits against COVID-19 infection, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Poison Control Centers reported an increase in toxic effects from people taking this medication.^{1/2}

In conclusion, Maine CDC opposes permitting a pharmacist to dispense, by standing order, ivermectin for treatment of COVID-19, influenza or cancer. Maine CDC does not agree there is merit or need for this legislation. There are multiple safe and effective treatments for COVID-19 and influenza infection and for many common cancers. Ivermectin does not provide a meaningful addition to this arsenal of medical treatments.

¹ Farah R, Kazzi Z, Brent J, Burkhart K, Wax P, Aldy K; Toxicology Investigators Consortium FACT Study Group. Ivermectin associated adverse events in the treatment and prevention of COVID-19 reported to the FACT pharmacovigilance project. *Clin Toxicol (Phila)*. 2022 Aug;60(8):942-946. Epub 2022 May 10.

² Temple C, Hoang R, Hendrickson RG. Toxic Effects from Ivermectin Use Associated with Prevention and Treatment of Covid-19. *N Engl J Med*. 2021 Dec 2;385(23):2197-2198. Epub 2021 Oct 20.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Puthiery Va".

Puthiery Va
Director
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Maine Department of Health and Human Services