



May 20, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Health Care, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee, my name is John Hennessy. I have the honor of serving as the President of the Board of Directors of EqualityMaine, the state's oldest and largest statewide organization dedicated to creating a fair and just society for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Mainers.

EqualityMaine supports **LD 1970 – An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Consent for HIV Testing and Disclosure of Related Medical Information for Insurance Purposes**. This bill aims to clarify and strengthen the requirements for informed consent before an individual can be tested for HIV. Efforts to improve awareness and reduce new infections are critical to ending the HIV epidemic. The bill before you will ensure that individuals better understand the purpose of the test, the potential risks and benefits, and the implication of their decision.

At the same time, the bill seeks to protect the privacy of individuals with HIV by restricting the disclosure of their HIV-related medical information to insurance companies without the individual's explicit consent. This is intended to prevent discrimination in insurance coverage based on HIV status.

EqualityMaine believes this legislation could have a significant impact on HIV testing and disclosure practices leading to increased protection for individual privacy rights regarding HIV status. Individuals at risk for HIV will benefit from improved understanding of HIV testing and its implications for individuals.

We urge your support for this bill.