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AARP Maine Testimony in support of LD 2151 An Act to Improve Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs in Underserved Areas

Greetings Chairs Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and Members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. My name is Bridget Quinn, I am an Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach with AARP Maine. AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our nearly 200,000 members in Maine thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 2151 today.

Being able to afford prescription drugs remains a top issue on the minds of Older Mainers. A 2024 AARP Maine survey of adults living in Maine showed that 86% of Mainers age 45+ think being able to afford prescription drugs is an important healthcare issue. Their concern is understandable.¹ With eight in ten (82%) adults 50 and older nationwide describing prescriptions as too expensive.² When prescriptions are too expensive or unattainable then we know Mainers will engage in dangerous behaviors such as skipping doses, splitting pills, and making decisions if they should pay for heat or their medicines.

This also affects older adults who are Medicare beneficiaries, four in ten (38%) adults 65-plus who are eligible for Medicare have either personally skipped filling a prescription due to cost or know someone who has.³ Older adults also have strong feelings about how public policy should seek to make prescriptions more affordable. Nine in ten (91%) believe that reducing prescription drug prices and out-of-pocket costs should be a top priority for elected officials.⁴

LD 2151 is a step in the right direction to support older adults, especially those in rural communities, afford their needed medications. Research has shown that access to prescription drugs through federally qualified health centers (FQHC) varies. However,

¹ Bonner Cozad, Aisha, Kate Bridges, and Cassandra Cantave. *AARP Vital Voices Research, 2022-2024*. Washington, DC: AARP Research, September 2022. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00524.000>

² Keenan, Teresa A. *The Burden of Prescription Drug Costs: A Survey of Adults Ages 50 and Older*. Washington, DC: AARP Research, August 2024. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00853.001>

³ Keenan, Teresa A. *The Burden of Prescription Drug Costs: A Survey of Adults Ages 50 and Older*. Washington, DC: AARP Research, August 2024. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00853.001>

⁴ Miller, Bryan. *Older Adults' Attitudes on Drug Prices and Medicare Negotiations: Annotated Questionnaire*. Washington, DC: AARP Research, January 2026. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.01043.001>

FQHC remain uniquely positioned to help get affordable prescriptions to consumers.⁵ This funding will support Maine's FQHC in getting affordable prescriptions to those who rely on them. For these reasons we urge this committee to support LD 2151. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. If you have questions for me I can be reached at 207-272-8563 or bquinn@aarpp.org.

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⁵ Lizheng Shi, M Kristina Wharton, Alisha Monnette. Ensuring access to prescription medications in the post-ACA healthcare access landscape: the essential role of FQHCs in the safety net for the underinsured. 2018 Mar.