



Testimony of Jessica Fay for
The Maine Council on Aging
January 27, 2026
In Support of LD 2151

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Care Insurance and Financial Services:

My name is Jess Fay and I am the Policy and Advocacy Director for the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA), a broad, multidisciplinary network of over 140 organizations, businesses, municipalities, and older community members working to ensure we can all live healthy, engaged, and secure lives with choices and opportunities as we age at home and in community settings.

MCOA is testifying **in support of LD 2151 “An Act to Improve Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs in Underserved Areas.”**

According to the 2025 Maine Healthy Aging Data Report, people over 60 make up 36.5% of Maine’s rural population¹. According to the same report, 50% of people over 65 in Maine have four or more chronic conditions. At least half of the people over 65 in Maine need to have access to a pharmacy to ensure they can effectively manage their chronic conditions.

Throughout the state there is a decline in the number of retail pharmacies and a reduction of hours for those still in operation due to ongoing workforce and economic challenges. When communities lose access to local pharmacies they lose an important health resource. If people are unable to get their medications, their conditions may worsen and they may have unnecessary hospitalization.

In Maine we have programs like the Maine Low-Cost Drug Program for the Elderly and Disabled (DEL) and Maine Rx Plus, which provide some financial access for low-income older people to afford the medications they need. However, if they don’t have a way to get their medications, there may be a decline in health and well-being.

Building on existing resources like Federally Qualified Health Centers, who are well-situated to address the needs of rural and underserved populations makes sense. LD 2151 establishes a grant program so the FQHCs can develop or expand their capacity to provide greater access to affordably priced drugs to their patients.

The MCOA supports this proposal especially because it uses trusted organizations that already exist to solve a critical problem. This is a perfect way to increase access to medications for people living rurally.

¹ Dugan, E., Lee, C.M., Jansen, T., Song, Q., Su, Y.J., & Silverstein, N.M. The Maine Healthy Aging Data Report: 2025 Highlights. (www.healthyagingdatareports.org/maine-healthy-aging-data-report/)

Thank you for the opportunity to share comments about LD 2151. We are available to answer any question you may have. Please reach out to jfay@mainecouncilonaging.org.