

State of Maine | 132nd Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Testimony of Megan Stewart on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
February 3, 2026

Supporting:
LD 2088 “An Act to Increase Access to Primary Care Provided by Physician Associates”
Sponsored by Representative Boyer

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Megan Stewart, Director of Government Relations at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

MPCA is a membership organization that represents Maine’s Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine’s CHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality and accessible primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 100 service delivery sites in all 16 Maine counties.

This legislation is an important step toward addressing the persistent and growing shortage of medical professionals across our state. Nowhere is this challenge more acute than in Maine’s rural and underserved communities, where long travel distances, limited workforce availability, and an aging population create significant barriers to timely, reliable access to care.

The demand for primary care services has not kept pace with the needs of rural Mainers, and delays in accessing care can lead to poorer health outcomes, particularly for patients who have chronic conditions or postpone necessary treatment because of the high cost of urgent care or emergency room visits.

Maine’s CHCs are feeling the strain of ongoing workforce shortages, and PAs are a vital part of their care teams. By modernizing practice and consultation requirements for PAs and allowing them to practice to the full extent of their education, training, and competencies, LD 2088 would help CHCs more fully utilize their workforce while maintaining a strong commitment to quality, safety, and continuity of care. For our providers and the patients they serve, this bill represents a practical and responsible solution to expanding access to care across Maine.

On behalf of Maine’s Community Health Centers, thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at mstewart@mepca.org with any follow-up questions.

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