

February 3, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in strong support of LD 2154. I am a nurse serving vulnerable populations in a rural area of our state, and I have seen firsthand the critical value of having a statewide Health Information Exchange (HIE). For several years, the HIE has directly improved patient care, particularly for those who are medically or socially vulnerable.

The statewide HIE allows healthcare providers immediate access to real-time patient information, including comprehensive medical histories, recent imaging, laboratory results, consult reports, and notes from community-based care teams. This level of integration ensures that the care provided is informed, accurate, and consistent across all settings.

When a patient presents to the emergency department, the HIE gives the care team instant access to allergies, chronic conditions, advance directives, recent primary and specialty care visits, EMS reports, and patient-centered care plans. This information is especially critical for patients who are unable to communicate, cannot recall their medical history—something very common during a medical emergency—or those who are elderly and medically complex.

I could share countless patient stories that demonstrate the impact of the HIE, but I will highlight two recent examples:

- A local self-employed carpenter without insurance came to our emergency department after his primary care provider ordered tests and imaging. Because the ER provider could view those results in real time through the HIE, additional testing was avoided. This saved the patient more than \$1,500—an amount that would have created a significant financial barrier and likely discouraged him from seeking further care.

- An elderly patient arrived recently in a confused state and unable to communicate. Through the HIE, our team immediately accessed notes from her specialty oncology provider in Southern Maine. Without the HIE, we would not have known she was undergoing active cancer treatment or the specifics of her current regimen, which could have delayed or compromised her care. Instead, we were able to continue her treatment appropriately, view her medications, confirm her advance directives, and contact her family. Both the patient and her family expressed tremendous gratitude.

The Health Information Exchange is more than a repository of data—it tells the patient's story. It reflects their goals, identifies their care team and support system, and serves as a statewide, real-time personal health record accessible wherever they seek care in Maine. It improves safety, reduces unnecessary costs, and ensures that patient goals remain central to every care transition and clinical decision.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

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