



February 10, 2026

Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Senator Donna Bailey - Chairwoman
C/O Clerk Edna Cayford
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Chairwoman Bailey and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee,

On behalf of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) and our members, we write in support of **LD 2146, *An Act to Increase Access to Critical Vaccinations*** as recently amended, and respectfully urge the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee **to further amend the bill and include the attached provider choice amendment that would strengthen the states Universal Purchase Vaccine Program.**

The amended LD 2146 updates Maine's Universal Immunization Program by directing the Maine Vaccine Board to consider, in addition to the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, recommendations from nationally recognized medical organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, when making its annual determination of vaccines to be made available through the program. The amendment authorizes the Board to request state funding to cover the cost of recommended vaccines for children who otherwise qualify for the federal Vaccines for Children Program when federal funding is unavailable.

The adoption of our Provider Choice amendment would strengthen this legislation by ensuring that Maine residents have access to all FDA-approved and medically recommended immunizations. By prioritizing patient and provider choice, the legislation ensures that individuals can access all medically appropriate vaccines, while empowering providers to work with their patients to determine the immunization that best meets their needs, which is a fundamental principle of the U.S. vaccination system. **A recent survey of New England vaccine providers found that over 70% consider vaccine choice important. Among pediatricians, that number rises to 74%. Providers know their patients best and must have the ability to select the vaccine that best meets individual needs, clinical circumstances, and public health goals.**

We believe that adding provider choice to the statute ensures that science in the driver's seat on decisions related to vaccine access, reinforces the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) rigorous, evidence-based data evaluation processes,¹ ensures that providers can make the best choice for their patients and the communities they serve, facilitates a robust

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [ACIP, GRADE \(Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation\)](#)



vaccine supply, and reduces vaccine hesitancy. Provider choice in vaccine is the predominant model in the United States – 49 states offer vaccine brand choice for providers.²

The policies of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) support provider choice, as does the intent of the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Recognizing the benefits of choice, the CDC has developed vaccine procurement policies designed to facilitate choice. The annually negotiated CDC contract allows access to **all** vaccine brands,³ and awardees responsible for the implementation of the VFC program can select vaccines without restriction. The CDC also encourages all awardees to offer choice of vaccine brands to providers. ACIP recommends multiple vaccine products as options for immunization against certain diseases in many instances. The ACIP considers evidence across multiple domains when developing recommendations and aligning vaccine choice policies with ACIP and medical societies ensures policies reflect the most current evidence-based recommendations.

Healthcare providers are the medical experts for their patients and are best suited to make an informed decision on which vaccine brand to choose for their patients, leveraging their medical training and prioritizing the unique needs of each patient. This is especially important because different vaccines may have differing efficacy, safety, and utilization profiles for specific patients. Furthermore, research indicates that patients are more likely to accept vaccinations when given options.⁴ When providers stock more than one product or when patients can find a provider offering a vaccine of choice, patients are more likely to be vaccinated.⁵

Provider choice facilitates a robust and resilient vaccine supply. Provider choice stabilizes the vaccine supply, encourages innovation, and offers some protection against the impact of supply shortages. In this light, limiting provider choice for vaccines can have unintended consequences. For example, purchasing vaccines from more than one source can help avoid vaccine shortages. In addition, as new vaccine products are licensed and ACIP recommendations are re-evaluated, allowing choice means that flexibility is built into the system to bring the complex ordering, distribution, registry, and billing systems online that must be updated.⁶ Like most medicines, vaccines are vulnerable to shortages when there are fewer available products. However, in the case of immunization supply interruption the impact could be dire for the health of an individual and their community.

² [Association of Immunization Managers. Vaccine Brand Choice Policy for Public and Private Providers Policy Map, January 2024.](#)

³ Table: Diseases and ACIP-Recommended Vaccines Covered by the VFC Program. VFC OPERATIONS GUIDE, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases Immunization Services Division, Vaccines for Children. July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, p

⁴ Kutasi et al. Understanding hesitancy with revealed preferences across COVID-19 vaccine types. 2022. Available here.

⁵ Sprengholz et al. The power of choice: Experimental evidence that freedom to choose a vaccine against COVID-19 improves willingness to be vaccinated. 2021. Available here.

⁶ [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccine Tracking System \(VTrckS\) and Vaccine Management Business Improvement Process \(VIMBIP\)](#)



As an industry, our expertise lies in scientific research, development, and manufacturing of medications and preventive measures. We strive to provide accurate and reliable information based on scientific evidence and expert guidance. BIO's vaccine manufacturer members remain committed to continuously working with federal and state policy makers to ensure policies related to vaccination follow the best available science. **As such, we urge the Committee to support including our Provider Choice amendment in LD 2146 and reaffirm Maine's dedication to ensuring provider choice in vaccines.** We stand ready to help in any discussion of this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen G. Burm". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stephen Burm
Director, State Government Affairs, Northeast Region
sburm@bio.org

About BIO

BIO is the premier biotechnology advocacy organization representing biotech companies, industry leaders, and state biotech associations in the United States and more than 35 countries around the globe. BIO members range from biotech start-ups to some of the world's largest biopharmaceutical companies – all united by the same goal: to develop medical and scientific breakthroughs that prevent and fight disease, restore health, and improve patients' lives. BIO also organizes the BIO International Convention and a series of annual conferences that drive partnerships, investment, and progress within the sector. Learn more at www.bio.org.