



Consumers for Affordable Health Care

Advocating the right to quality, affordable
health care for all Mainers.

P.O. Box 2490
Augusta, ME 04338
Telephone: 1-800-965-7476
Fax: 1-888-214-5233
www.mainecahc.org
consumerhealth@mainecahc.org

Testimony In Support of:

LD 2190, An Act to Implement Certain Changes in the Certificate of Need Laws Recommended by the Commission to Evaluate the Scope of Regulatory Review and Oversight over Health Care Transactions That Impact the Delivery of Health Care Services in the State

February 18, 2026

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. I am Kate Ende, Policy Director for Consumers for Affordable Health Care. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of LD 2190, An Act to Implement Certain Changes in the Certificate of Need Laws Recommended by the Commission to Evaluate the Scope of Regulatory Review and Oversight over Health Care Transactions That Impact the Delivery of Health Care Services in the State.

Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that advocates the right to quality, affordable health care for every person in Maine. As designated by Maine's Attorney General, CAHC serves as Maine's Health Insurance Consumer Assistance Program (CAP), which operates a toll-free HelpLine. Our HelpLine fields thousands of calls and emails every year from people across Maine who need help obtaining, keeping, using, or fixing problems with private health insurance or with accessing or affording health care services. CAHC also serves as the Ombudsman program for Maine's Medicaid program, MaineCare, and helps people apply for and navigate the enrollment and access to health care services under MaineCare. It is with that background that we provide these comments.

I had the pleasure of serving on the Commission to Evaluate the Scope of Regulatory Review and Oversight over Health Care Transactions That Impact the Delivery of Health Care Services in the State. During this process, we learned that current Certificate of Need reviews are not required to consider impacts of proposals on the costs to consumers and purchasers, other than the State Medicaid program.

The results from a recent survey of Maine voters, which we will be releasing soon, show that 4 out of 10 Maine households have taken on medical debt in the past two years. 34% of respondents reported delaying or skipping a recommended medical test due to costs and more than 4 out of 10 Mainers report experiencing pain or discomfort for longer than they needed to, due to medical costs.

Mainers are experiencing an affordability crisis and all proposals being considered through Maine's Certificate of Need program should weigh the potential impact on affordability and access to services for all Maine people, regardless of what type of insurance coverage they have.

Furthermore, experiences in other states have shown us that private equity and similar investment structures frequently prioritize short-term financial returns over long-term community health outcomes. LD 2190 requires a more robust review when such entities seek to acquire or control health facilities. This additional scrutiny will help protect Maine's health care infrastructure and ensure that decisions are made with the public's well-being at the forefront.

For these reasons, we urge you to support LD 2190. Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions.