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February 26th, 2026

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 2208 – An Act to Offset Federal Cuts to Health Insurance for Certain Maine Families and Seniors

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Victoria Forkus, and I am writing in strong support of LD 2208, a bill that takes critical steps to protect vulnerable Mainers from federal health-insurance funding cuts.

LD 2208 creates the Rural Hospital Stabilization Program, a targeted grant initiative that helps rural health care providers cover operating costs, reopen closed services, and prevent further reductions in essential care. Maine's rural hospitals continue to face severe financial pressures, and this strains their ability to offer essential health services. By establishing a dedicated, non-lapsing funding source and directing support to Medicaid-serving health facilities, this bill seeks to strengthen the stability of our rural health system.

This legislation also ensures that new or expanded rural health services are provided with much-needed support during the early days of operation, and for up to five years, a time when they are most vulnerable to revenue gaps and potential closure. For many communities, especially in rural areas with limited provider options, these supports can make the difference between maintaining access to care or losing it entirely.

By advancing LD 2208, we will also safeguard health care access for thousands of Maine residents who would otherwise pay the cost of federal policy changes by establishing the Health Care Premium Stabilization Fund and the MaineCare Federal Response Fund. Together, these funds will provide subsidies for Mainers impacted by the expiration of the enhanced premium tax credits under the American Rescue Plan Act (2021).

This bill is a smart, fiscally responsible investment in health care access and economic stability for low-income Mainers. For these reasons, MeCAP respectfully urges you to support and advance LD 2208.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Victoria D. Forkus

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