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Karen Saylor, MD, President | Jeffrey S. Barkin, MD, President-Elect | Erik N. Steele, DO, FAAFP, Chair, Board of Directors  
Andrew B. MacLean, JD, CEO | Dan Morin, Director of Communications & Government Affairs

TO: The Honorable Heather Sanborn, Chair  
The Honorable Denise Tepler, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

FM: Dan Morin, Director of Communications and Government Affairs

DATE: April 21, 2021

RE: **Support with Suggested Amendment**

LD 749, An Act To Establish a Council on Health Systems Development

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The [Maine Medical Association](#) is the state's largest professional physician organization representing more than 4300 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical specialties, organizations, and practice settings.

The MMA supports LD 749, An Act To Establish a Council on Health Systems Development, as amended, however, respectfully requests an additional amendment to the bill from the committee.

The amended version outlines, "*the Governor shall seek nominations from the public, from statewide associations representing hospitals, physicians and consumers and from individuals and organizations with expertise in health care delivery systems, health care financing, health care quality and public health.*"

However, each reference in that section is clearly referenced under the composition section of the newly created Council on Health Systems Development except—except the people closest to the patients, physicians and other clinical colleagues. We believe this is an unintentional oversight.

Therefore, we respectfully suggest the following be added to the bill:

- One individual who represents a statewide association of physicians

Physicians should have a formal decision making seat at the table in any process and discussion on the future of health care in Maine when it comes to access to care, how it is financed, and in determining appropriate quality clinical guidelines.

Non-hospital based independent community physicians have been an integral part of our care system for over 150 years—over two “once-in-a-lifetime” pandemics—and have certainly shown their worth during the current emergency. We respectfully request they be added to the bill as any development of an efficient and high-quality health system should be developed with direct input from physicians.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The MMA urges a vote of Ought To Pass with our suggested amendment for LD 749, An Act To Establish a Council on Health Systems Development.