



**Testimony of Peter Hayes  
to the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services**

**Neither For Nor Against**

**LD 663, An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections and Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome**

**March 28, 2023**

Good afternoon Senator Bailey, Representative Hatch, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services.

My name is Peter Hayes and I'm the President and CEO of the Healthcare Purchaser Alliance of Maine. The HPA is a nonprofit that represents the purchasers of healthcare in Maine. Our mission is to advance healthcare value and to support and incentivize high-quality, affordable care. We have over 60 members, including some of the largest public and private employers and health trusts in Maine. Collectively, our members spend over a billion dollars annually providing health care for nearly one quarter of the commercially insured population in the state.

I'm here today to testify neither for nor against LD 663. As we've heard today, families with a PANDAS diagnosis face tremendous challenges. However, decisions by the Legislature to mandate coverage for certain treatments must be made carefully, taking into account the potential costs and benefits, and prioritizing medically necessary and clinically appropriate care. Some of the testimony we've heard today speaks to the efficacy of certain treatments for children with PANDAS diagnoses. Yet, according to the Bureau of Insurance mandate study conducted on similar legislation in the 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature, in the Summary of Major Changes in its 2018 Redbook, the American Academy of Pediatrics states that "language has been strengthened discouraging antimicrobial treatment or prophylaxis, IVIG, or plasmapheresis for children with symptoms suggestive of [PANDAS/PANS]"<sup>1</sup>

We are not medical experts, but it appears that there is some disagreement among those experts regarding the efficacy of the treatments for which LD 663 would mandate coverage. In addition to the testimony you heard here today, we urge the committee to consider the statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics regarding these treatments, and to focus expansion of mandated coverage on treatments for which there is consensus among the clinical experts regarding efficacy.

Thank you for the opportunity to share HPA's feedback on LD 663. I'd be happy to answer any questions and will be available for the work session.

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<sup>1</sup> Jessica Pupillo, PANDAS/PANS treatments, awareness evolve, but some experts skeptical. AAP News & Journals. March 28, 2017, <https://www.aapublications.org/news/2017/03/28/Pandas032817>, accessed August 13, 2019, as found in: Donna Novak, Marti Hooper, "A Report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services of the 129<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature: Review and Evaluation of LD 1138, An Act to Ensure Health Insurance Coverage for Treatment for Childhood Postinfectious Neuroimmune Disorders Including Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections and Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome," Maine Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureau of Insurance, January 2020.