



May 7, 2023

The Honorable Donna Bailey, Chair
Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee
Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

The Honorable Anne Perry, Chair
Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee
Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1577: An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Biomarker Testing

Submitted By: The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) and BioME

Dear Chairs Bailey and Perry and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services:

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) and BioME thanks the committee for the opportunity to comment on our support for LD 1577. This legislation to provide coverage for biomarker testing will improve patient care in Maine.

BIO is the world's largest trade association representing biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. Our members are committed to advancing science and improving the health and well-being of our planet using biotechnology.

BIO supports timely, appropriate, and equitable access to biomarker testing as well as adequate coverage and reimbursement by public and private payers when testing is supported by clinical guidelines or peer-reviewed scientific evidence. Delays in biomarker testing and coverage may lead to worse outcomes for patients.

Continuing advances in science and genomics are driving an increased understanding of human physiology and how diseases affect the body; these advances are helping researchers identify new biomarkers. As more biomarkers are identified, they have the



potential to greatly enhance the drug development process by providing researchers with new ways to measure disease activity, reduce the amount of time required to show a medicine is safe or effective, and enable the development of more personalized, precision medicine— particularly where multiple biomarkers can inform the use of targeted drug combinations.

Biomarkers can also allow researchers to better understand how effective a treatment is against a disease with endpoints that are difficult to define, providing clinicians with additional informative measurements in the early diagnosis of a disease and identifying differences in responses between individuals or subpopulations.

The development of personalized medicines that are more tailored to the individual patient using biomarkers helps drive efficiencies and improvements in patient care. That is because biomarkers can help identify those most likely to benefit from a specific treatment. For example, biomarkers are often used in cancer treatments to identify patients with tumors expressing certain genomic characteristics that indicate those patients are likely to respond to a targeted cancer therapy. In another example, they can be used to ensure that a certain patient with a rare disease will most likely benefit from a specific therapy, such as a gene therapy.

BIO believes that access to biomarker testing should not be delayed, as this may have detrimental effects on patient outcomes. If patients do not have access to biomarker testing, they may not be offered life-saving targeted therapies that can improve their overall health outcome. Additionally, it is important that if access to a particular therapy is dependent upon a specific biomarker, coverage policies must reflect the new advances in treatment. Coverage policies should never stand in the way of access to treatment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information.

Sincerely,

/s/

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)

BioME