

Testimony of Kim Caldwell, MPAS, PA-C, Maine Academy of Physician Associates

In Support of LD 107 "An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Biomarker Testing"

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee. My name is Kim Caldwell, I am the immediate past president of the Maine Academy of Physician Associates, an Auburn resident and Medical Director of ConvenientMD Urgent Care Centers in Maine. Maine Academy of PA's (MEAPA) is a non-profit that represents the over 1,000 PAs practicing in Maine and the patients we care for and today we testify before you in support of LD 107 "An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Biomarker Testing".

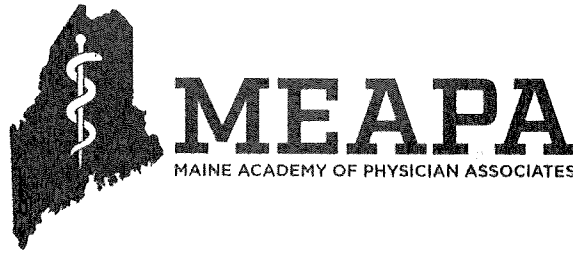
The importance of biomarker testing in improving treatment outcomes for cancer, autoimmune, rheumatological, cardiac, neurologic and other rare diseases cannot be overstated. Biomarkers are used to diagnose disease, predict response to various treatments, monitor treatment success and determine risk of recurrence or progression. In a rapidly evolving landscape with many new treatments coming to market over 60% of new treatments approved by the FDA in the last 5 years require biomarker testing prior to treatment initiation¹.

In doing so, these tests guide our treatment plans and answer burning questions for our patients, who are often anxious to know the full impact of their illness. Unfortunately, not all patients are benefiting from this vital information. Patients from communities of color, lower income households, and patients treated at rural, non-academic medical centers are less likely to receive biomarker testing. Cost and insurance coverage is at the heart of this issue, despite the reality that timely access to appropriate biomarker testing allows patients to avoid costly and often uncomfortable treatments which are likely to be ineffective. Without action to expand coverage of biomarker testing, we will continue to see increasing disparities as advances in medical treatments continue to evolve.

This legislation will ensure Mainers covered by Medicaid and state regulated insurance plans have coverage for biomarker testing when medically appropriate.

Twenty states have passed legislation aligning coverage of biomarker testing across disease types with the latest evidence. (Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Texas). Here in Maine we must take immediate

¹ Global Oncology Trends 2021. IQVIA Institute; June 2021.



measures to remove barriers to biomarker testing and ensure ALL of our citizens have access to these lifesaving testing modalities, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or zip code.

Thank you for your time and consideration.