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Testimony of the Maine Centers for Disease Control
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

In support of LD 93, *An Act to Reduce Cost and Increase Access to Disease Prevention by Expanding the Universal Childhood Immunization Program to Include Adults*

Sponsor: Representative Zager
Hearing Date: February 5, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Jessica Shiminski, and I serve as the program director of the Maine Centers for Disease Control (Maine CDC) Immunization Program (MIP) in the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. I am here today to testify in support of LD 93, *An Act to Reduce Cost and Increase Access to Disease Prevention by Expanding the Universal Childhood Immunization Program to Include Adults*.

We'd like to thank Representative Zager for sponsoring this legislation, proposed by the Department, that seeks to amend the law governing the Universal Childhood Immunization Program¹ to expand the program to provide immunizations to and cover the costs of recommended vaccines for adults in the State. Building on Maine's longstanding success with the Universal Childhood Immunization Program, this expansion ensures that all Mainers, regardless of age, can access vaccines to protect against preventable diseases while promoting health equity. By broadening access to vaccinations for adults, this initiative will provide preventative care for adults 19 – 64 years old and increase access points around the State for adult patients.

The expansion also aims to streamline vaccine accessibility for healthcare providers and remove financial barriers. By funding the program through an annual assessment paid by insurers, providers will no longer need to purchase vaccines upfront for their adult patients. This eliminates cost burdens on providers while simplifying operations, allowing for greater focus on patient care. Additionally, this program will utilize federal contract pricing, reducing vaccine

¹ The Universal Childhood Immunization Program is established in law to ensure all children from birth until 19 years of age in the State access to a uniform set of vaccines. The program is administered by MIP and overseen by the Maine Vaccine Board which works to ensure that Maine children gain improved access to vaccines, health care providers receive state-supplied vaccines at no charge. The program: provides a set of vaccines for children from birth to 19 years old; works to expand access to vaccines; optimizes resources to lower the cost of vaccines; tracks vaccine-preventable diseases and controls outbreaks; provides technical assistance and education; and links individuals to health care systems. ([22 MRS section 1066](#)).

costs by up to 27% compared to privately purchased vaccines and creating millions of dollars in annual cost savings for the state.

The Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) fully supports LD 93 and its goal of expanding the Universal Childhood Immunization Program to include adults. This voluntary program aligns with the Maine CDC's mission to protect and promote the health and well-being of the people of Maine. Maine has long demonstrated the effectiveness of the Universal Childhood Immunization Program in ensuring equitable access to vaccines for children. By mirroring this to adult immunizations, the state can extend these benefits to a broader population while addressing barriers to vaccination access. This proposal supports healthcare providers, simplifies vaccine accessibility and ensures that no Mainer faces financial obstacle to receiving necessary immunizations.

The issue addressed by this bill is a critical public health concern. Adults in Maine face many barriers to accessing vaccines, including high insurance deductibles, limited access points, and limited vaccine, which only leaves this population vulnerable to preventable disease. By broadening this program to include adults we eliminate these barriers, along with vaccine preventable diseases, ensuring that all recommended vaccines are readily available to every adult in Maine.

In conclusion, LD 93 provides an opportunity to enhance the public health in our State. This expansion will reduce costs, increase access and support providers in offering vital vaccines to their patients. Maine CDC strongly supports the legislation and respectfully asks the Committee to enact LD 93 as a step forward towards achieving equitable healthcare for all adults 19 – 64 years old.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and to make myself available for questions at the work session.