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INCORPORATED IN MAINE

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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Good Afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Members of the Joint Standing Committee On Appropriations and Financial Affairs, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is Madeleine DesFosses, and I'm testifying today on behalf of my organization, the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The Maine AAP is a membership organization of nearly 300 pediatricians and subspecialists across the state dedicated to protecting and improving the health of Maine children and adolescents.

We'd like to first thank Governor Mills for not proposing funding cuts to the Fund for a Healthy Maine, which is a vital source of funding for many of the programs that help to prevent disease and promote public health in our state. Maintaining the fund and continuing to invest in prevention and public health programs is crucial to ensuring that Maine children and adolescents can grow up and live healthy lives.

However, we are concerned by the proposed changes that would restructure the budget and move \$22.1 million out of the Fund for a Healthy Maine and into the General fund – a risky move that would jeopardize the future and sustainability of the Fund, and the programs and positions that work to keep our communities healthy.

In shrinking and destabilizing the Fund for a Healthy Maine, we're reneging on our promise to create healthy and bright futures for our youth. We strongly urge you to preserve and support the Fund for a Healthy Maine, and instead of moving funds out, move a portion of the revenue generated by the current tobacco excise tax *into* the Fund for a Healthy Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Madeleine DesFosses

Advocacy and Public Health Manager, Maine AAP