

April 16, 2025

Senator Donna Bailey, Chair
Representative Kristi Mathieson, Chair
Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee

RE: Testimony IN SUPPORT - LD 1018, An Act to Protect Health Care for Rural and Underserved Areas by Prohibiting Discrimination by Participants in a Federal Drug Discount Program

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee:

My name is Dr. Meagan Rusby. I am a resident of Corinth, the Associate Director of Pharmacy at Penobscot Community Health Care (PCHC), and the President of the Maine Society of Health-System Pharmacists (MSHP). Today I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Society of Health System Pharmacists, an organization that has more than 300 members statewide and primarily represents individual Pharmacists, Technicians and students who practice in a health-system setting. I am testifying today in support of - LD 1018, An Act to Protect Health Care for Rural and Underserved Areas by Prohibiting Discrimination by Participants in a Federal Drug Discount Program

In 2021, LD 603 amended the Maine Pharmacy Act to define pharmacy practice as the provision of healthcare services and recognized pharmacists as healthcare providers. Despite this recognition, pharmacists still lack a reliable mechanism for reimbursement for their clinical services. As a result, many health systems and health centers rely heavily on 340B savings to fund these vital pharmacist-led services.

Pharmacists do far more than dispense medications. At PCHC, our pharmacists are integrated into primary and specialty care teams, helping manage chronic conditions such as diabetes, asthma, COPD, osteoporosis, and hepatitis C. They monitor anticoagulation therapy, guide patients in weight management, and support insulin pump and continuous glucose monitor use—services once limited to specialists like endocrinologists. This expanded role is especially critical given the shortage of specialists in Maine.

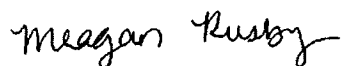
Pharmacists also play a key role in **deprescribing**—ensuring patients are on the fewest, most appropriate medications. Despite the misperception of pharmacists as “drug pushers,” we aim to optimize and streamline medication regimens for each patient’s unique needs.

Another growing challenge is that prescribing decisions are increasingly dictated by insurance formularies rather than clinical judgment. Pharmacists support prescribers in navigating these restrictions, helping identify affordable, effective options for patients.

Without the protections provided by LD 1018, the sustainability of pharmacist-led care—especially in rural and underserved areas—remains at risk. Continued discrimination against 340B-covered entities threatens the funding that allows pharmacists to provide these crucial services.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support LD 1018 to ensure continued access to pharmacist-driven care across Maine.

Respectfully,



Meagan Rusby, PharmD

Associate Director of Pharmacy | Penobscot Community Health Care
President | Maine Society of Health-System Pharmacists