



MAINE PHARMACY

ASSOCIATION

PO Box 5257 | Augusta, ME | 04332

April 16, 2025

The Honorable Senator Donna Bailey, Chair

The Honorable Representative Kristi Mathieson, Chair

The Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Dear Senators and Representatives,

My name is Amelia Arnold, I am a resident of Winthrop, Maine, a licensed pharmacist employed by Community Pharmacies, and the Legislative Liaison for the Maine Pharmacy Association. The MPA is the state pharmacy organization that addresses the advocacy, continuing education, and professional needs of all licensed pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and student pharmacists in Maine. Our mission is to promote public health by advocating for the profession of pharmacy. On behalf of the Maine Pharmacy Association, I am testifying 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.

The 340B program is a vital tool that helps hospitals and health centers provide essential medications and services to underserved populations. It's also deeply important to community pharmacies, especially in rural areas like much of Maine. Through partnerships with 340B-covered entities, community pharmacies dispense medications to vulnerable patients and help keep them adherent to life-saving treatments, with the benefits of the program sustaining much-needed access to care in an otherwise unsustainable payment model.

However, in recent years, drug manufacturers have aggressively undermined the 340B program by imposing unilateral restrictions on contract pharmacies that participate in these partnerships. Many of the members of the Maine Pharmacy Association own or work at pharmacies that participate in the 340b program. These restrictions include refusing to ship 340B medications to certain pharmacies or demanding claims data from covered entities that are burdensome and often unrelated to compliance or fraud prevention as they claim.

These actions do not protect patients. They do not lower drug costs. What they do is cut off funding from safety-net providers and squeeze community pharmacies already operating on narrow margins.

To set the record straight, community pharmacies are not making windfall profits from 340B. In many cases, these partnerships help us stay open when Pharmacy Benefit Managers frequently reimburse our pharmacies below the cost of purchasing the drugs we are dispensing. They allow us to keep services local — so that Mainers in rural towns don't have to drive many miles to get a prescription filled or get advice from a pharmacist they know and trust. We are partners in care, not middlemen. And when manufacturers impose these restrictions, it doesn't just hurt hospitals and community health centers — it hurts community pharmacies and the patients we serve together.

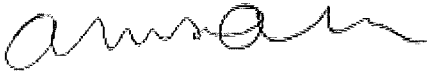
Maine's healthcare system is already under pressure. Pharmacy closures are accelerating across the state. Workforce shortages, lower reimbursement rates, and increasing overhead costs are all putting substantial strain on local pharmacies. For many of us, 340B partnerships with covered entities are one of the few ways we have to stay sustainable — not to enrich ourselves, but to keep our doors open, maintain jobs, and serve our neighbors.

LD 1018 will ensure that drug manufacturers cannot sidestep the rules as laid out by HRSA through targeting contract pharmacies. It will safeguard the partnerships between 340B entities and community pharmacies that are essential to rural and underserved care delivery in Maine.

On behalf of the pharmacists who work in every corner of this state — and the patients who rely on us — we respectfully ask you to support LD 1018. Let's stand up for small-town pharmacies, protect access to medications in our communities, and push back against tactics that prioritize profit over people.

Thank you for your time and attention. We welcome any questions and look forward to continuing to work with you to protect pharmacy access across Maine.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amelia', with a stylized, flowing script.

Amelia Arnold, PharmD
Legislative Liaison | Maine Pharmacy Association