



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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LD 1115: An Act to Expand Eligibility Under the State's Group Health Insurance Plan to employees and Members of the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

Sponsor: Representative Amanda Collamore
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Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Amanda Collamore, and I have the distinct pleasure of representing House District 68, Pittsfield, Clinton, Burnham, and Troy. I come before you today to present **LD 1115: An Act to Expand Eligibility Under the State's Group Health Insurance Plan to employees and Members of the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children.**

This bill came before the 131st Legislature and passed with **unanimous support** from the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Affairs. It also passed with **unanimous support** from both bodies in the Legislature. This consensus reflects what this bill truly represents—a **nonpartisan solution to a very real problem**. Unfortunately, this bill was part of the bills that died on Veto Day last year, missing the Chief Executive's signature.

This bill does **not** create a mandate. It does **not** cost Maine taxpayers a single dollar. What it does is allow the Maine AEYC—an established professional association dedicated to supporting early childhood educators—to act as a group health insurance holder for its employees and members. **This is about expanding access, not expanding cost.**

As it stands, early childhood educators working in public institutions have access to group health insurance coverage. But those working for private childcare providers and family centers—who make up a large portion of the early childhood workforce in our state—often struggle to access affordable, quality health insurance. This disparity affects both workforce retention and the quality of care available to Maine's youngest children.

By allowing Maine AEYC to offer access to group health insurance, we are taking a simple and fair step toward equity in the early childhood education field. These educators are foundational to our state's workforce and economy. They care for our children during their most formative years. They deserve access to the same benefits their public counterparts receive.

Again, I want to reiterate: this bill is **not a mandate**, it incurs **no public cost**, and it has already earned the **unanimous support** in the 131st.

I respectfully urge you to support this bill and help ensure that Maine's early childhood educators—no matter where they work—can access the health care coverage they need and deserve.

Thank you, and I would be happy to take any questions.