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Home Care & Hospice
Inland Hospital
Maine Coast Hospital
Mayo Hospital
Mercy Hospital
Northern Light Health Foundation
Northern Light Pharmacy
Sebasticook Valley Hospital

LD 1713 An Act to Prohibit Certain Provisions in Health Care Provider Contracts with Insurance Carriers

Testimony in Opposition April 29, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Services Committee, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN. I am speaking today in opposition to this bill on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with more than 10,000 employees statewide.

Northern Light Health is proud of our status as an Accountable Care Organization working to improve the health of Maine's population in our care. As an ACO we work to reduce the overall cost of care for the population attributed to our ACO and meet quality benchmarks. Through care coordination, Northern Light Health is enhancing provider efficiency and supporting a team approach to delivering care, leading to improved patient engagement and healthcare quality. We share in the savings we achieve with our ACO payer partners, Medicare and Medicaid. Caring for a population is not about any one entity within our health system, it is an integrated approach to care throughout the continuum of services.

We are an integrated health system with a common electronic health care record, advanced data and analytics that drive our quality initiatives and health care clinicians working in clinical pathways that integrate care throughout the patient experience. Our contracts reflect a system of care that is one comprehensive provider of health care. We are not a disconnected inventory of health care services.

This bill is not about carriers wanting to carve out of our health system contract a tertiary medical center that serves two thirds of Maine's geography nor is the bill about carving out one of only two independent psychiatric hospitals in Maine. This bill is about harming rural healthcare with a legal framework for carriers to exclude rural hospitals in our health care system from Northern Light Health insurance contracts.

As a largely rural state we believe that rural healthcare is integral to Northern Light Health. As we care for rural populations we also create jobs, draw employers to economically challenged regions of our state and support local education when children of our employees populate the local schools. Our contracts reflect a commitment to rural communities that would otherwise be at risk of eroding access to health care.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition to this important legislation.