

LD 1883 TESTIMONY

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Committee. My name is Tom Sterne, and I live in Bridgton. I am a retired primary care physician, community health center leader and health economist who practiced in the Boston metropolitan area before moving to Maine. I am on the Board of Maine AllCare, and here to testify in favor of LD 1883.

By now, you know and understand the on-the-brink status of families, providers and institutions regarding healthcare delivery and funding here in Maine... and that there exist overarching forces that have brought us to this place, that cannot be resolved with a piecemeal approach. You have tried, and we are still at a tipping point. What remains is the information the Committee and the legislature need to come to agreement on an encompassing approach to the solution.

As humans, we absorb information and come to decisions in varied ways. We begin with biases and preferences, based on our ideologies and general world views, which affect how we see and hear things. Some crave content, in detail and with explanations. Others focus less on specifics and more on “the big picture.”

I am here to offer both. Representing the authors of the All Maine Health Plan, which is the foundation of LD 1883, I can provide both a general overview , and more detailed explanations in plain language of the most important sections of the bill. There are important sections of said plan that sadly do not appear in the Revisor's submission.

The mission is to provide robust healthcare coverage to all Maine residents. The method would be to use the monies saved by the drastic reduction of administrative overhead generated by insurance companies and required now by providers to assist in offering benefits without crippling deductibles, to all, including Medicare beneficiaries. Contributions to cover the costs would be made in the same way we all pay into our Social Security and Medicare plans, based on income. Employers would contribute their fair share. Providers would be compensated fairly, and special needs like primary care and rural hospitals would be made solvent.

What we ask is that you keep an open mind as you hear testimony about the Plan and the need to reassess and hopefully alter our current

framework. We want to be able to respond to each and every question you have regarding the simplicity, fairness, and efficiency of our proposal.

I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1883, and would be pleased to answer any questions you have.

Thank you

Tom Sterne, MD, M.Sc.