



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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January 7, 2026

Testimony of Representative Anne Graham in support of
**LD 1772, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon
Commission to Design a Plan for Sustained Investment in Preventing Disease
and Improving the Health of Maine Communities**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. As you know, I am Representative Anne Graham and I am proud to represent the towns of North Yarmouth and the majority of Gray in the Maine House. I thank you for allowing me to testify in support of **LD 1772, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission to Design a Plan for Sustained Investment in Preventing Disease and Improving the Health of Maine Communities.**

I am pleased to offer my strong support for LD 1772 as amended. I want to thank Senator Bennett for his leadership in support of the Fund for a Healthy Maine and the critical prevention and public health investments that make such a difference in the lives of our children and grandchildren and throughout our communities.

While I know this amendment takes a more incremental approach to some of the challenges we are facing as public health policymakers, I am very enthusiastic about the three primary components in this bill. Each one responds to a need, fills a gap, solves a problem, and creates opportunity for better planning and better health outcomes for Maine people.

As many of you know, I've had the privilege to serve on our committee for multiple years, and I've watched us grapple with complex proposals and seemingly impossible challenges. I can say with 100% surety that having a team of experts in our corner helping us sort through the data, understand trends and community needs, provide a birds-eye view on what our nonprofit and business partners are doing, and support us in designing policies that are tailored for Maine would be invaluable.

In parallel, supporting the Maine Center for Disease Control with more capacity to develop a robust and broadly-scoped state health plan would help us and our partners be more efficient with our limited public health and prevention resources. I want a state health plan like Maine's new transportation plan that takes a comprehensive view of health-related conditions and

strategies and gives us a blueprint to prepare and respond to opportunities, long-standing risks, and emerging threats.

And finally, I want us to stay laser-focused on the importance of keeping the Fund for a Healthy Maine (FHM) secure, strong, and prepared for choppy waters. The FHM Stabilization Account is about being prudent and prepared. As we all know well, prevention doesn't work when programs come and go. Prevention requires a plan and sustained effort, and the Fund for a Healthy Maine needs a stable foundation for its work.

I hope you will join me in supporting LD 1772.