



Glenn "Chip" Curry
Senator, District 11

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Chip Curry introducing

LD 2134, "An Act to Create an Exception to the Prohibition of Tobacco Sales in Retail Establishments Containing Pharmacies for Certain Small Grocery Stores,"

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

January 28, 2026

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, distinguished members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Chip Curry. I have the honor of representing the 26 rural, coastal, and island communities of Waldo County in the Maine Senate. Thank you for the opportunity to present LD 2134, "An Act to Create an Exception to the Prohibition of Tobacco Sales in Retail Establishments Containing Pharmacies for Certain Small Grocery Stores." This is a narrow, practical fix to a law that had unintended consequences for some community grocery stores.

Last session, the Legislature made changes to tobacco sales laws that were primarily aimed at large chain retailers with in-store pharmacies. But in the process, a handful of smaller, locally owned grocery stores were swept in as well — stores that happen to lease space to an independently operated pharmacy but otherwise operate just like any other neighborhood grocer.

For these stores, tobacco sales are a lawful product line that helps keep their doors open in a very tough retail environment. Losing that revenue because of a technicality in how their building is structured puts additional strain on businesses that are already operating on thin margins and serving communities that may have few other grocery options.

LD 2134 creates a clear, limited exception for small grocery stores under 26,000 square feet, where the pharmacy is independently licensed, separately leased, operating as its own business, and was already established in the store prior to July 7, 2025. The grocery store must still comply with all other laws governing tobacco sales.

This bill does not expand tobacco access but does prevent the closure and disruption of a small number of pharmacies located in our more rural parts of the state. It corrects an unintended impact on small Maine grocers and helps keep local pharmacies viable in the communities that rely on them.

Thank you for your time, and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Chip Curry
State Senator, District 11
Representing the twenty-six rural, coastal, and island communities of Waldo County