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Testimony of Representative Kristi Mathieson in support of
LD 2071, An Act to Expand Access to Vaccines Approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration by Allowing Pharmacists to Prescribe, Dispense and Administer Vaccines and Require Insurance Coverage, and LD 2146, An Act to Increase Access to Critical Vaccinations
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Senator Bailey and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. I am Representative Kristi Mathieson, and I have the honor of representing House District 151, the lovely seaside community of Kittery. I am here today to speak in support of both **LD 2071, An Act to Expand Access to Vaccines Approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration by Allowing Pharmacists to Prescribe, Dispense and Administer Vaccines and Require Insurance Coverage** and **LD 2146, An Act to Increase Access to Critical Vaccinations**.

While these bills, as amended, address different components of Maine's immunization system, together they strengthen access, improve consistency, and support evidence-based public health policy.

LD 2071, as amended, makes practical, evidence-based updates to Maine's vaccination system by expanding access and removing unnecessary barriers. The amendment allows pharmacists (following section 13832 and board rules) to prescribe, dispense, or administer any FDA licensed vaccine recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices when those recommendations align with guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, or the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. This authority applies to adults 18 and older.

For children ages 3 to 17, pharmacists may administer these vaccines with a valid prescription, and they may also provide influenza and COVID-19 vaccines to individuals six months and

older. The amendment also clarifies that trained pharmacy interns can administer vaccines under direct supervision. It removes unnecessary reporting requirements, since all vaccinations are already recorded in the state's immunization information system. Finally, LD 2071 requires insurance carriers to cover vaccines without cost sharing to help eliminate financial barriers that often prevent people from receiving recommended immunizations.

LD 2146 strengthens Maine's immunization framework by ensuring that vaccine decisions are guided by recommendations from nationally recognized medical organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Aligning the Universal Immunization Program with these trusted, evidence-based sources brings clarity, consistency, and scientific rigor to the state's vaccine determinations. The amendment also authorizes the Maine Vaccine Board to request state funding when federal Vaccines for Children Program support is insufficient, safeguarding children's access to recommended immunizations regardless of fluctuations in federal resources. In addition, LD 2146 provides reasonable liability protection for pharmacists who administer vaccines according to state approved guidelines, allowing them to follow Maine's clinical standards with confidence while maintaining strong expectations for training and safety.

Together, LD 2071 and LD 2146 modernize Maine's immunization system by improving access, strengthening evidence-based decision making, and supporting providers in delivering safe, effective care. I respectfully urge the Committee to support both amendments.

Thank you for your consideration.