



**RETAIL
ASSOCIATION OF
MAINE**
Voice of Maine Retail

Retail Association of Maine
45 Melville Street, Suite 1
Augusta, ME 04330
Tel: 207.623.1149 | Mobile:
207.240.7377
curtis@retailmaine.org
www.retailmaine.org

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Testimony in SUPPORT for 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

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee:

My name is Curtis Picard and I am the President and CEO of the Retail Association of Maine. I am a resident of Topsham. Our membership includes pharmacies located within regional grocery chains as well as independent, locally owned pharmacies serving rural and underserved communities across the state. We have more than 350 members statewide and represent retailers of all sizes. Maine's retailers employ more than 85,000 Mainers.

RAM respectfully submits testimony in support of LD 2071.

Pharmacies are among the most accessible health care locations in Maine. In many communities, particularly rural areas, retail pharmacies are often the most consistent, convenient, and trusted point of contact for preventive health services. For some Mainers, the local pharmacy is the only nearby health care provider available during evenings, weekends, or outside of standard office hours.

As noted by our partners in the pharmacy community, barriers to routine vaccination often arise not from safety concerns, but from outdated statutory frameworks, prescriber access challenges, or inconsistent insurance coverage. When statute lags behind clinical practice, patients can face unnecessary delays in receiving routine, evidence-based preventive care.

From a retail pharmacy perspective, LD 2071 represents a practical, patient-focused solution that reflects how health care is delivered today:

Improves access in all regions of the state

Retail pharmacies (both large and small) operate in urban centers, suburban neighborhoods, and rural communities. Expanding pharmacists' ability to prescribe and administer vaccines ensures that Mainers can receive timely preventive care close to home.

Supports community-based health care infrastructure

Independent pharmacies and grocery-based pharmacies alike are critical health care anchors. These businesses employ local staff, serve as accessible care providers, and often step in where traditional primary care capacity is limited.

Maintains appropriate safeguards

The proposal, as amended, retains age-based distinctions, continues to require prescriptions for pediatric patients, and preserves existing licensure, training, and supervision standards. This balanced approach expands access while maintaining important patient protections.

Addresses affordability barriers

LD 2071's requirement that insurers and MaineCare cover recommended vaccines without deductibles or copayments directly reduces financial barriers that discourage timely vaccination. For many families, even modest out-of-pocket costs can delay preventive care. For large retail pharmacies, this bill allows them to better meet patient demand during peak vaccination periods. For small independent pharmacies, this flexibility can be essential to maintaining access to routine immunizations.

Ultimately, LD 2071 supports a simple but important goal: allowing Mainers to receive recommended vaccines safely, affordably, and conveniently from trained professionals in their own communities.

On behalf of retail pharmacies across Maine, the Retail Association of Maine respectfully urges the Committee to **vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 2071.**

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.



Curtis Picard, President & CEO,
Retail Association of Maine
45 Melville St., Augusta, ME 04330
curtis@retailmaine.org | 207-623-1149