

State of Maine | 132nd Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Testimony of Megan Stewart on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
February 26, 2026

Supporting:

LD 2208 “An Act to Offset Federal Cuts to Health Insurance for Certain Maine Families and Seniors”
Sponsored by Speaker Fecteau

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Megan Stewart, Director of Government Relations at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

MPCA is a membership organization that represents Maine’s Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine’s CHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality and accessible primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 100 service delivery sites in all 16 Maine counties.

MPCA supports LD 2208, and we are grateful to Speaker Fecteau for bringing this important legislation forward. The establishment of a dedicated, non-lapsing fund to provide additional funds to Maine’s Rural Health Transformation Program initiatives is a positive step in helping to stabilize struggling rural health providers. However, it is our hope that the committee will consider expanding the program to also include medically underserved areas/populations (MUA/P) that will also be negatively impacted by recent federal policy changes. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) defines MUA/P as a “county or a group of contiguous counties, a group of county or civil divisions or a group of urban census tracts in which residents have a shortage of personal health services”¹. In addition to our rural patients, Maine’s CHCs also serve a large number of medically underserved populations across the state.

When the federal government failed to renew the enhanced premium tax credits under the Affordable Care Act, Mainers receiving insurance through Maine’s Health Insurance Marketplace were faced with tough decisions, including whether to pay the higher price of their current plan, decrease plan coverage for lower cost health plans, or going uninsured. Establishing the Health Care Premium Stabilization Fund will not only help Mainers and their families, but it will help health care providers as well. The Fund will help ensure that Mainers can afford the Marketplace plan that best meets their needs, while reducing the uncompensated care burden that healthcare providers like CHCs face when treating uninsured patients.

Furthermore, the impending changes to Medicaid/MaineCare are going to have an immense impact on CHC operations in our state. Across our network, health center leaders are thinking through short- and long-term strategies that will allow them to pivot where necessary and continue serving as the primary care safety-net in Maine, despite significant expected revenue reductions. MPCA is encouraged by LD 2208’s establishing of a MaineCare Federal Response Fund, as supplemental funding to offset federal cuts to programs will benefit both current recipients of MaineCare and MaineCare providers. For these reasons, MPCA supports the passage of LD 2208.

¹ <https://data.hrsa.gov/about/glossary#M>



On behalf of Maine's Community Health Centers, thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at mstewart@mepca.org with any follow-up questions.

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