



**LD 172 An Act To Improve Prescription Information Access
Testimony in Opposition**

February 11, 2021

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN, I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Pharmacy speaking in opposition to this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern, and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with over 12,000 employees statewide.

This bill proposes to require pharmacies to place on a prescription label a 2-dimensional machine scannable barcode that allows a patient to digitally access prescription information. In considering this bill it is important to understand that patients are already required to receive printed information regarding the medication provided to them as well as a verbal offer for additional consultation regarding the medication. Patients can also call their pharmacy and speak with pharmacist regarding any follow-up questions. Pharmacists are committed to providing patients with educational information regarding their medications.

Mandating that a bar-code be placed on each prescription label presents a significant challenge for most pharmacies in Maine. Northern Light Pharmacy, like many pharmacies, does not have the technical capability to implement this requirement as our software vendor does not have this functionality. We also note that our pharmacists are fully focused and engaged in the Northern Light Health COVID-19 vaccine effort. We also have concern should we be required to divert pharmacist attention and resources from performing this important public health function.

While we oppose the unique standard proposed in this bill, we are committed to providing patients with written and verbal educational information regarding their medications.

Thank you.

Northern Light Health
Government Relations
43 Whiting Hill Road
Brewer, Maine 04412

Office 207-861-3282
Fax 207-872-2030

Northern Light Health

Acadia Hospital
A.R. Gould Hospital
Beacon Health
Blue Hill Hospital
C.A. Dean Hospital
Eastern Maine Medical Center
Home Care & Hospice
Inland Hospital
Maine Coast Hospital
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Northern Light Health Foundation
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