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I would like to submit written testimony in favor of LD 274, since determining the best methods and definitions to use in collecting data to better understand racial and ethnic disparities in the provision of health care in Maine is an essential first step in identifying and dismantling racism in Maine healthcare systems. Systemic racism is often supported by institutional policies and unconscious biases based on negative stereotypes, and exists in all areas of life. Without a method of accurate, unbiased data collection, the path to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in health care will not exist. Identifying and implementing effective strategies to eliminate racial biases in healthcare needs to be a top focus. Thank you.