

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services: my name is Adam Zuckerman and I am the lobbyist for Maine People's Alliance. Our 32,000 members stretch from Kittery to Fort Kent. I am pleased today to testify in favor of President Jackson and Speaker Fecteau's LD 1, An Act To Establish the COVID-19 Patient Bill of Rights.

The COVID-19 Patient Bill of Rights (LD 1) is essential legislation that will save lives and help our state to recover from this deadly pandemic. Access to health care is a human right. How much money you have and if you have insurance should not determine whether or not you and your family get crucial care, especially in the midst of a public health crisis.

When it comes to an infectious pandemic, we are only as healthy as the most vulnerable amongst us. Not only is ensuring health care access the right thing to do—it's smart policy. I want my neighbors to have access to COVID testing and treatment not just because I care about them but because it makes me and my family safer as well.

Our state has the unenviable distinction of having [the nation's worst racial disparity in COVID infection rates](#). That is in part because of our [disparities in health care access](#). LD 1 will help to narrow that gap.

COVID-19 has threatened the health and safety of Mainers, upended our economy and hurt working families. In order to defeat this virus and rebuild, we need to make sure that Maine people can get what they need to stay healthy, recover from this virus and get the best protection available going forward. The COVID-19 Patient Bill of Rights sets us on the right path for health and economic recovery.