



**Senator Matthea Daughtry**

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**Testimony by State Senator Matthea Daughtry  
In Support of LD 120, LD 1117, LD 686, LD 675 and LD 673  
Presented to the Joint Standing Committee on  
Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and Distinguished Colleagues of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services:

My name is Mattie Daughtry and I am the State Senator for Senate District 24, which includes the towns of Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, North Yarmouth, and Pownal. I am pleased to support LDs 120, 1117, 686, 675 and 673 – also known as the Making Health Care Work for Maine Package.

I know that all across Maine working families are struggling to get by. Each time I talk to a constituent in my community, the rising high costs of health care and prescription drugs comes up. These difficulties have only been exacerbated by this pandemic. My heart breaks every time someone shares their story with me of sitting down with the bills and choosing where and how to pinch their pennies so that they can continue to afford their prescriptions, keep the heat on and put food on the table. These stories are all too common, and I'm proud of my Senate colleagues for working to deliver relief for Mainers.

Pharmaceutical companies are doing everything they can to protect their profits. This often comes at the expense of working families and seniors who have no choice but to take on debt just to afford life-saving and sustaining medications. This issue also hits close to home for me. My own mother has a condition called atrial fibrillation, known more commonly as AFib. This causes her to have an irregular heartbeat, and without regular medication she is at risk of blood clots, stroke and heart failure. Through no fault of her own, AFib is a part of my mom's life and again, through no fault of her own, so is arguing with insurance companies and struggling to find prescription drugs that she can afford.

My mom takes 4 medications to control her condition, 2 of which are generic and 2 of which are name brand. The two name brand drugs cost over \$1400 a month, which causes her to go into the Medicare coverage gap by the end of March each year. This past year, she made the tough choice to stop taking one of these drugs, in part because of the costs. I know that my mom isn't alone in this. These costs are more than enough to force someone into financial ruin.

I am so grateful for modern medicine that allows people like my mom to live long and happy lives even with chronic conditions. Why should we allow corporate greed to make these medications unaffordable and force people like her to make difficult and unfair decisions about if and when to take lifesaving drugs? This issue doesn't just affect my mom, more than 131 million people — 66 percent of all adults in the United States — use prescription drugs.<sup>1</sup> These folks deserve care that is affordable and reliable and they shouldn't have to fear going into debt just to stay alive.

That's why I'm proud to support the Making Health Care Work for Maine package. I know that bills like LD 1117, "An Act To Prevent Excessive Prices for Prescription Drugs" would protect Mainers from price gouging and LD 686, "An Act To Increase Prescription Drug Pricing Transparency" would allow lawmakers to better understand prescription drug pricing and pass targeted legislation to close loopholes and rein in costs. These bills are important as we continue our fight to rein in extreme prescription drug price increases and demand more drug pricing transparency. Mainers depend on us to solve this problem, and she shouldn't stop until we deliver.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in favor of these bills. I am happy to answer any questions.

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<https://hpi.georgetown.edu/rxdrugs/#:~:text=More%20than%20131%20million%20people,and%20those%20with%20chronic%20conditions>.