

Sammy-Ellie MacKinnon  
South Portland

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and honorable members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee: My name is Sammy-Ellie MacKinnon. I am a resident of South Portland and I am here today to testify in favor of LD 120.

I have a pre-existing condition, or as the rest of the world calls it, a medical history. I was diagnosed with Becker's Muscular Dystrophy at eight years of age, and at various points in my life, I have seen multiple specialists: neurologists, pulmonologists, cardiologists, orthopedists, and physical therapists. I know the medical system pretty well by now. I also know the struggles of having subpar insurance coverage.

I remember being only 10 or 11 and hearing my mother yelling and crying on the phone to the insurance company. They wanted to deny coverage to me, her daughter, for something I was born with at a genetic level. I have been lucky enough to access these services, in part, because my parents never stopped fighting. They made sure we were covered, found in-network doctors, and immediately reached out if there were any issues coming from a provider's office or the insurance company.

Not everyone has access to this type of support system or even coverage; we as individuals largely have to push back and advocate against these for profit companies on our own with no one in our corner to back us. This is the reason - I am the reason - why LD 120 is needed to establish the Office of Affordable Health Care and make healthcare truly work for Mainers.

Constituents like me who have preexisting conditions, diabetes, or need specialty prescriptions, also need an advocate in government to support us. Someone who will implement policies that place people over profits, and individuals over pharmaceutical and health insurance lobbies. Please - don't force us to keep fighting for our well-being alone.

Thank you all for your time, I urge you to vote to advance this bill.