

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and members of the Health Care, Financial and Insurance Committee. My name is Beth Franklin, I live in Cumberland, and I'm pleased to provide testimony in favor of LD 1045.

In March and April of 2021, Bar Harbor, Surry and Brooksville joined six other Maine communities in approving a resolution in support of healthcare for everyone in Maine. Brooklin was preceded by the municipalities of Bangor, Blue Hill, Brunswick, Orono and Penobscot, which approved similar resolutions in 2020. Each of the resolutions requests the Maine Legislature "to create an equitable health plan that provides every Maine resident with comprehensive medical care from birth to death."

The Bangor resolution was passed without debate during the February 10th council meeting. Similarly, the Blue Hill resolution was approved nine days later, and the Penobscot Select Board approved its healthcare resolution on March 10th. All of the resolutions contain similar introductory "whereas" statements, noting that an equitable and comprehensive health plan for all would simplify our complicated and confusing system, eliminate administrative waste and improve the quality of life of our residents.

The Brunswick resolution specifically mentions dental, mental health, vision and hearing care in addition to medical care, and also contains additional "whereas" statements referring to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before these efforts, it has been 20 years since a Maine city or town has expressed support for universal healthcare. In 2001, Portland voters approved an advisory referendum question, a resolution supporting the creation of a system of universal healthcare. That referendum question resolved "that healthcare is an essential safeguard of human life and dignity and that there is an obligation for society to ensure that every person be able to realize that right."

The only way to get to universal health care AND reduce costs is to treat us all equally and fairly and remove the profit motive from saving lives. And, the only thing standing between us and having that life saving care for everyone is your political will. I hope and pray that you will move LD 1045 forward.

Thank you for your attention.