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Testimony of Representative Patty Hymanson in support of LD 1390, "An Act To Maximize Health Care Coverage for the Uninsured through Easy Enrollment in the MaineCare Program or in a Qualified Health Plan in the Marketplace"
May 12, 2021

Good morning Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and the esteemed Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. I am Representative Patricia Hymanson and I represent House District 4, which consists of parts of York, Wells, Sanford and all of Ogunquit. I come before you today to speak in support of LD 1390, "An Act To Maximize Health Care Coverage for the Uninsured through Easy Enrollment in the MaineCare Program or in a Qualified Health Plan in the Marketplace."

This bill creates a check-off on the state income tax form to gain assistance in enrolling for health coverage.

This is a bill to increase access to health care and that is a valuable goal. The system for enrolling can be confusing and have barriers, so using a common tax form to get access can finally assist a person to get access to health care coverage.

Just yesterday I was shopping in Kittery and I overheard the young retail staff talking to each other. One said her brother had a \$7000 deductible on his health insurance and he could never afford to pay that if he were in an accident or had some other severe health condition. The other said being in debt \$7000 was better than being financially ruined for many, many years because he didn't have any health insurance. Her words made me think again about the financial burden of not being covered and being unlucky enough to be diagnosed with a major illness or have a significant accident. In my medical practice, diagnosing and treating neurologic diseases that most often affect a lifetime, I witnessed the severe stress and avoidance of needed care that being uninsured brings.

This is a bill to give people a chance to put their hand up, say they do not have health coverage and get help to remedy that. I hope you can support this bill.

Thank you for your attention. I am happy to answer questions as I am able.