

Dear Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee,

My name is Nicole Ivins, and I live in Portland. I support bill LD 1045.

Universal healthcare is a basic human right and is essential for every resident in Maine. The way to support people's independence and agency is to ensure basic needs are provided, healthcare coverage being one of them, and I can attest to this.

Prior to moving to Portland, I lived in Massachusetts, where the state government passed a bill for near universal healthcare coverage 4 years before the Affordable Care Act was passed. My field is adult basic education and full-time benefited positions in this field are very rare. In MA, I taught for many years as a part-time teacher in a few different adult education programs and was able to access affordable and comprehensive healthcare coverage because Massachusetts provided affordable healthcare insurance, which was based upon my income, and in my opinion was quite affordable. One of the major reasons I was able to work in the field in which I was trained and that I love was because I had access affordable healthcare coverage.

One of my biggest concerns about moving to Maine was whether my family would have access to affordable healthcare. My three year old daughter and I both qualify for MaineCare at the moment because I spend most of my time caring for her and do not have much outside income. When I return to the workforce full-time, I'm worried that my healthcare options will be limited. With the future of the ACA seemingly always hanging in the balance, I'm very concerned about the future of healthcare in Maine. I urge Maine to follow Massachusetts' example and support the health and well-being of Maine residents and help them reach their full potential as valued members of our society by passing LD 1045.

Thank you for you time,

Nicole Ivins