

State of Maine
130th Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Testimony of Marge L. Kilkelly, MS, CED, on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
May 12, 2021

Supporting:

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”

Sponsored by Representative Evans

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Marge Kilkelly, Policy Manager at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA). MPCA is a membership organization that includes all of Maine's 20 Community Health Centers (CHCs).

Maine's CHCs provide comprehensive medical, behavioral, and dental care for approximately 1 in 6 Maine people. Community Health Centers make up the largest primary care network in the state, and they provide high quality, wide-ranging health care services. They are at the forefront of delivering care to rural and underserved Maine communities, and serve patients regardless of their health insurance status or ability to pay.

Maine Primary Care Association supports LD 1390 and thanks Representative Evans and the other sponsors for bringing this legislation forward.

Health coverage is both essential and complicated. Every day, CHC staff see the challenges that face an individual or family who is uninsured, and work diligently to assure that patients are aware of available health care coverage options.

We strongly endorse efforts to increase support for Maine people seeking health care coverage. At MPCA, we are very proud that Maine CHCs have prioritized staffing of Assistants, even after the federal funding was cut for those positions. Further, they have used their limited resources to increase social service support to patients, which includes programs to assist patients navigating the complexities of drug plans and pricing.

As you deliberate this broad issue of access to health care coverage information, we would encourage the Committee to also consider how CHCs can be a larger part of the solution.

For example, federal law currently requires that the state Medicaid Plan cover “outstationing” of staff at disproportionate share hospitals (DSH) and CHCs¹ to assist people in applying for Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP.) By fulfilling the outstationing requirements and passing LD 1390, we believe that more Maine people will be able to access essential health care coverage.

On behalf of the patients, staff, and volunteers at Maine’s Community Health Centers, we urge passage of LD 1390.

Thank you for considering our comments, and please do not hesitate to contact me directly at mkilkelly@mepca.org with any follow up questions.

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¹ [42 CFR § 435.904 - Establishment of outstation locations to process applications for certain low-income eligibility groups.](#)