

Joe Lendvai
Bath

Testimony in support of LD 1045 before the Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services on
May 12, 2021 by Joe Lendvai, Bath Maine _____

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. Good morning.

My name is Joe Lendvai. I live in Bath, Maine. I support LD 1045 and want to commend Representative Brooks for her commitment and persistence in working to bring universal healthcare to every Maine resident.

We need to pass this bill because it is transformational.

For example, it doesn't just prohibit surprise medical bills (LD 46, LD 365), or just expand tele-health and other technologies, or attempt to reduce specific drug costs, or promote dental health for a distinct population, or attempt to provide timely mental health services in rural areas (LD 1531), or prohibit prior authorization requirements (LD 1268), or addresses healthcare worker shortages (LD 1194) etc., etc. These and dozens of similar and important bills that have come before you already, just as they have come before previous legislative committees, all trying to address narrow, specific problems and inequities within our current healthcare system.

So, hard as you try, hard as we all try to improve our common healthcare predicament, we will not succeed by nibbling at the edges of our current system. It remains complex, costly and exclusionary, leaving tens of thousand of our neighbors uninsured; and many thousands more underinsured.

We need a bold change – not more mechanics to try to fix individual broken parts, but a brand new model, one that is simple, fair, and efficient – a universal, publicly funded healthcare system that is comprehensive in scope, that will cost less per person and will cover everyone. Just imagine, we'll have no need for networks, no deductibles, no copays, no co-insurance, no barriers.

In closing, when we talk about healthcare, words matter.

We are “patients”; we are not “consumers”. It's an important distinction. To put it plainly, none of us shop around for the cheapest doctor when we're faced with a heart attack.

Please take this historic step. Please vote YES on LD 1045 and protect the health of all Maine people equally.

Thank you. Questions?

####