



Testimony of Hilary Schneider, Government Relations Director,
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and
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LD 1463, An Act To Make Health Care Coverage More Affordable for Working Families and Small Businesses

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, which supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. As the nation's leading advocate for public policies that are helping to defeat cancer, ACS CAN ensures that cancer patients, survivors, and their families have a voice in public policy matters at all levels of government. The American Heart Association (AHA) is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, whose mission is to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. Our organizations continue to work to extend access to adequate and affordable health care and support LD 1463.

Access to quality health care is essential for leading a healthy life and achieving your full potential. Having adequate and affordable health insurance coverage is a key determinant for surviving cancer and cardiovascular disease. People at risk for cancer and cardiovascular disease who are uninsured, meaning they do not have health insurance coverage, or underinsured, meaning their insurance does not cover needed care, are less likely to be screened for cancer or cardiovascular disease and more likely to be diagnosed later when likelihood of survival is lower, greater health care interventions are needed and disease is more costly to treat. We are mission- and evidence-driven in our efforts to continue to strengthen our health care system for the benefit of all.

Health care costs are still a major concern for families, employers and government. Today there are still uninsured and underinsured people in Maine who would be unable to afford potentially life-extending care. Your chances of surviving cancer or cardiovascular disease vary greatly by sexual or gender identity, race, and ethnicity. Trends are also influenced by where people live, household income, their level of education and other social determinants of health. For these patients, access to affordable and adequate health insurance coverage is a matter of life and death. Further, the link between quality health insurance, quality health care and health outcomes for this population is clear and well documented. Delaying care can have huge negative consequences for both patients and for the healthcare system. Not having access to quality, comprehensive health coverage and care is bad for patients.

To achieve our mission to be a relentless force for longer, healthier lives, to eliminate cardiovascular disease and cancer we must continue our critical work to increase affordability and access to health coverage for more Mainers. As such, we urge you to vote ought to pass for LD1463.

Sincerely,
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