

February 15, 2022

Senator Heather Sanborn, Chair  
Representative Denise Tepler, Chair  
Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee

**RE: Testimony, LD 1636 Act To Reduce Prescription Drug Costs by Using International Pricing**

Dear Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and members of the Health Coverage and Financial Services Committee:

My name is Amy Downing, I am a resident of Smithfield and the Executive Director of the Maine Society of Health System Pharmacists. Today I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Society of Health System Pharmacists, an organization that has more than 300 members statewide and primarily represents individual Pharmacists, Technicians and students who practice in a health-system setting. I am testifying today neither for nor against LD 1636.

While we support the overall purpose of this bill, to lower the cost of prescription drugs to consumers, there are areas of this bill that are cause for concern to the pharmacy community. Specifically, **Section 2. Payment in excess of referenced rate prohibited.** Because hospital and retail pharmacies have no control over what wholesalers or manufacturers charge them, prohibiting them from purchasing drugs above the “referenced rate” could lead to a disruption in access to medications.

The distribution system in the U.S. is not set up the same as Canada and therefore requiring the same reference rate as Canada would not be feasible at this time. Pharmacies simply can’t charge a consumer less than what they are able to buy the drugs for themselves. Pharmacists are pillars of their community and work tirelessly to get the most affordable drugs for their patients everyday and would adopt these lower price points if the lower acquisition cost was made available to them.

The Maine Society of Health System Pharmacists would be happy to work with the committee in anyway we can on LD 1636. Please reach out if we can be of service.

Kind Regards,



Amy Downing  
Executive Director | Maine Society of Health System Pharmacists