

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services
LD 1636: An Act To Reduce Prescription Drug Costs by Using International Pricing
February 15, 2022

Chairwomen Sanborn and Tepler, members of the committee, thank you for having me here today.

My name is Sabrina Fuhrer and I am from Old Town. I am a mother, sister, daughter, and frontline COVID-19 screener. I have personally felt the impact of high drug prices in each one of these roles.

When my youngest son was 18 months old, he was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. In order to survive, he relies on Humalog Insulin. Just a month's supply of his Humalog is priced at \$649.99. Thankfully, he is on MaineCare for now — but I live in constant fear of what I would do if he were to lose this coverage.

My brother is also diabetic. I watched my parents struggle over the years to pay for his medications — at times they were even forced to choose between buying groceries and covering my brother's insulin.

Due to the high costs, my brother has had to change which kind of insulin he takes — sometimes even resorting to rationing it to make the vials last longer. Nobody should have to make the choices like this.

When my father became seriously ill, doctors told us he needed dialysis and numerous medications in order to survive. When my dad ultimately made the decision to not seek these treatments, I knew a large part of his reason was that he did not want the family to have one more medical cost to think about.

I see other families struggling under the high cost of prescription drugs in my work as a COVID-19 response frontline worker.

Each day, I go to work, hoping to make the lives of patients a little easier as they struggle with their own health issues. And every day, I watch as patients worry about how they will afford their next bill at the pharmacy counter instead of focusing on their recovery.

Unfortunately, my story is not unique. Patients in America pay more for prescription drugs than anywhere else in the world. In Canada, a vial of my son's insulin costs less than \$50. If I could obtain that price, I'd save hundreds of dollars a month and have so much peace of mind. Bringing prices for Mainers in line with what Canada pays would provide relief to so many families like mine who are struggling to make ends meet.

We need change. I urge you to support LD 1636 to protect my family, my patients, and fellow Mainers from the burden of high drug prices.

Thank you for your time.