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Karen Saylor, MD, President | Jeffrey S. Barkin, MD, President-Elect | Erik N. Steele, DO, FAAFP, Chair, Board of Directors  
Andrew B. MacLean, JD, CEO | Dan Morin, Director of Communications & Government Affairs

TO: The Honorable Ned Claxton, Chair  
The Honorable Michele Meyer, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee On Health and Human Services

FM: Dan Morin, Director of Communications and Government Affairs

DATE: February 10, 2021

RE: **Support**  
LD 47, An Act To Fund the State's Free Health Clinics

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The Maine Medical Association is the state's largest professional physician organization representing more than 4300 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine and promote the health of all Maine residents.

The MMA has made physician voluntary work, both in Maine and overseas, a major focus. Our website provides a [list of free medical clinics](#) throughout Maine.

We strongly support LD 47 to ensure needed funding for these critical state safety-net programs at appropriate levels to allow for affordable health care access.

The health-care system in the United States is burdened with disparities and free clinics focus on the issues and needs of the medically underserved communities. Affordability, accessibility and portability of health care are issues that remain critical to the uninsured and underrepresented in Maine.

In 2020, the MMA formed a [Committee on Race, Ethnicity, and Health Disparities](#). The initial goal is to: Initiate, encourage, and support efforts to increase physician workforce diversity, remove implicit bias in health care oversight and delivery, and eliminate racial health disparities through

awareness, education, training, research, effective interventions, and advocacy. As a result of this focus, the MMA's Legislative Committee and MMA Board of Directors considered bills addressing health care disparities to be foundational issues warranting support before the Maine Legislature.

Thank you for your acceptance and review of our comments in strong support of LD 47. We will be available to work on any potential amendments before the work session and intend to be in virtual attendance for the discussion.