

Maine Chapter

INCORPORATED IN MAINE

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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March 3, 2022

Dear Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Maine Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics in full support of LD 372, An Act to Provide Maine Children Access to Affordable Health Care.

The four pillars of this bill are to:

- Fully implement CHIP by changing eligibility from 209% to 300% FPL which allows Maine to receive matching federal funds
- Remove the premium payments that are an administrative burden to collect
- Eliminate the waiting period
- Provide coverage for late adolescents, 19 and 20 years of age

In addition to these critical needs, implementing CHIP also helps us to address workforce shortages and protects children who live experience financial constraints and can't afford health insurance to provide for their children. This bill would allow Maine to receive three federal dollars for every one Maine dollar we spend on CHIP coverage. This is health care money Maine needs to provide for our children and support the health care system that cares for them.

Neighboring states have all taken measures to ensure their vulnerable youth are covered – Maine needs to follow their excellent example. The physical, mental and oral health of Maine's children is critical to their futures and ours! Maine has the highest rates of uninsured children in New England.

On behalf of Maine's pediatricians, we are strongly in favor of this bill to increase eligibility and ask that you please make the decision to support this essential bill.

Best regards,

Dee Kerry

Executive Director