



TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

In Support Of

[LD 1470](#) - *Resolve, Regarding Reimbursement for Providing Inpatient Care to Individuals with Acute Mental Health Care Needs*

April 27, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Jeffrey Austin and I am with the Maine Hospital Association. I am offering this testimony in support of LD 1470.

The Maine Hospital Association (MHA) represents all 36 community-governed hospitals including 33 non-profit general acute care hospitals, 2 private psychiatric hospitals, and 1 acute rehabilitation hospital.

In addition to acute-care hospital facilities, we also represent 11 home health agencies, 18 skilled nursing facilities, 19 nursing facilities, 12 residential care facilities, and more than 300 physician practices.

The Maine Hospital Association believes that the Behavioral Health System in Maine needs additional resources in several different areas. Each week this Committee hears about these needs through the various bills that are presented to you. An important component of this need is additional inpatient psychiatric beds. We applaud the Administration's efforts to open a gero-psych unit on the campus of the Dorothea Dix State Hospital in Bangor but believe that even more resources are needed and that this bill to open additional inpatient psychiatric capacity in York County is critically important.

We conservatively estimate that on any given day there are approximately 75-80 patients awaiting care in Maine hospital emergency rooms with many of these patients in need of some level of inpatient care. This proposal wouldn't meet all of that need, but it would be a piece of the solution and one that we are happy to support.

As you learned during the budget hearings, the base rate for this service has not been increased in at least a decade. We encourage you on behalf of all hospitals in Maine to vote this bill "ought to pass."

Thank you.
