



**Testimony of Maine Public Health Association In Support of:
LD 745: An Act To Strengthen Maine's Public Health by Expanding Access to Certain Health Programs
and Services**

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Room 220, Cross State Office Building
Tuesday, May 4, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Rebecca Boulos. I am a resident of South Portland and executive director of Maine Public Health Association. MPHA is in support of LD 745: “An Act To Strengthen Maine's Public Health by Expanding Access to Certain Health Programs and Services.”

MPHA is the state’s oldest, largest, and most diverse association for public health professionals. We represent more than 500 individual members and 30 organizations across the state. The mission of MPHA is to improve and sustain the health and well-being of all people in Maine through health promotion, disease prevention, and the advancement of health equity. As a statewide nonprofit association, we advocate, act, and advise on critical public health challenges, aiming to improve the policies, systems, and environments that underlie health inequities – but which also have potential to improve health outcomes for all people in Maine. We are not tied to a national agenda, which means we are responsive to the needs of Maine’s communities and we take that responsibility seriously.

This bill would allow Maine to purchase vaccines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention federal contract for use in all adults under the age of 65 years, presumably lowering the cost of vaccines to payers. This program would expand upon Maine’s existing program, which currently serves only children.

Vaccinations are a highly effective public health intervention that, when accessible, prevent infection and the spread of illness, saving millions of lives every year. This bill would expand access to these life-saving vaccines and provide cost savings to the state. Three other states have similar programs ([Vermont](#), [Alaska](#) and [Rhode Island](#)). While we understand there are still details to be addressed, such as which vaccines will be covered and timeline for implementation, we strongly support this bill in concept as we believe it will improve public health and health equity. We respectfully request you vote LD 745 “Ought to Pass.” Thank you for your consideration.