

State of Maine | 131st Legislature  
Committee on Housing  
Testimony of Hannah Hudson on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association  
May 12, 2023

Supporting:

**LD 1710, “An Act to Establish the Maine Rental Assistance and Guarantee Program and Amend the Laws Regarding Tenants and the Municipal General Assistance Program”**

Sponsored by Representative Golek

Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and members of the Committee on Housing, I am Hannah Hudson, Policy and Communications Manager at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA). MPCA is a membership organization that includes all of Maine's 20 Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine's CHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality and equitable primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers).

MPCA supports LD 1710, and we thank Representative Golek and the other cosponsors for bringing this legislation forward. By helping Maine families with low income afford housing by creating the Home Opportunity Fund and improving legal protections for renters, LD 1710 will give more Maine renters fair treatment, greater choice, and stability.

Now more than ever, CHCs are being called to meet the diverse and growing needs of vulnerable populations and those seeking trauma-informed and patient-centered care close to home. CHCs' ability to address a wide range of primary care issues, while also understanding and responding to Social Drivers of Health (SDOH), makes them a crucial part of the nation's healthcare infrastructure and a leader in efforts to address inequities in health care delivery.

Inequities in the SDOH have wide-ranging effects on health and survival. Community Health Centers utilize a “whole person” approach to providing services and unique care-team provider models. With the CHC collaborative care model, providers are often well acquainted with a patient's needs beyond just medical services. Primary care providers, behavioral health care providers, case managers, and many more non-clinical staff members, work together to ensure that CHC patients are receiving all the support they need. They are positioned to identify and address SDOH, including economic stability and access to safe neighborhoods and built environments.

When Maine families can afford safe and accessible housing, the entire community benefits; it helps people achieve financial stability, builds our workforce, strengthens our schools, and leads to better health outcomes.

On behalf of Maine's Community Health Centers, thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at [hhudson@mepca.org](mailto:hhudson@mepca.org) with any follow up questions.

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