

State of Maine | 130th Legislature

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services
Testimony of Marge L. Kilkelly, MS, CED, on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
April 13, 2021

Supporting:

**LD 120, "An Act To Lower Health Care Costs through the Establishment of
the Office of Affordable Health Care"**

Sponsored by Senator Jackson

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services, I am Marge Kilkelly, Policy Program Manager at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA). MPCA is a membership organization that includes all of Maine's 20 Community Health Centers (CHCs).

Maine's CHCs provide comprehensive medical, behavioral, and dental care for approximately 1 in 6 Maine people. Community Health Centers make up the largest primary care network in the state, and they provide high quality, wide-ranging health care services. They are at the forefront of delivering care to rural and underserved Maine communities, and serve patients regardless of their health insurance status or ability to pay.

Maine Primary Care Association supports LD 120 and thanks Senator Jackson and the other sponsors for bringing this legislation forward.

The complexity of health care today is only outmatched by the need for policy makers to have immediate and accurate information about health care costs, trends, and drivers that can assist them in developing strong public policy.

Maine is unique; we are the oldest state in the country and the most rural. The business mix continues to be a robust combination of rural, natural resource heritage industries, alongside tourism and cutting-edge science and manufacturing.

Therefore, Maine's health care needs, costs, and challenges are unique as well; while we can always learn from the experiences of other states and regions, it is critical that we have the ability to study, learn, and implement policy solutions that fit our needs.

The creation of a non-partisan Office of Affordable Health Care is a commonsense step in the direction of assuring that Maine policy makers have access to the best and latest information as they develop future health care policy for Maine.

Further, as pharmaceutical prices are a significant driver of health care costs, we support the coordination of staffing for the Maine Prescription Drug Affordability Board by this Office, and look forward to working with both to provide quality, affordable care for all Maine people.

On behalf of the patients, staff, and volunteers at Maine's Community Health Centers, we urge passage of LD 120.

Thank you for considering our comments, and please do not hesitate to contact me directly at mkilkelly@mepca.org with any follow up questions.

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