

State of Maine | 131st Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Testimony of Hannah Hudson on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association
March 5, 2024

Neither For Nor Against:
LD 307, “An Act to Lower the State’s Health Care Costs”
Sponsored by Representative Morris

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Hannah Hudson, Director of Policy at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

MPCA is a membership organization representing Maine's 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 (or 1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 80 service delivery sites around the State.

Ensuring oral health care access for the communities we serve remains a priority for MPCA and the Community Health Center Network. As an organization, we are focused on supporting CHCs with the expansion of MaineCare’s comprehensive adult dental benefit. This includes dental assistant training, addressing health equity needs, and ensuring that CHC voices are included at relevant state-level meetings.

MPCA is testifying neither for nor against LD 307. We believe that the State needs an articulated and multi-faceted strategy for the incorporation of managed care efforts in our state before moving forward with a managed care carveout for dental. Without that guiding strategy, we are very concerned that it could have the potential to further splinter the already fractured health care delivery system in Maine. Additionally, without solid evidence that this approach would increase access, we are concerned that this could trigger additional barriers to care and lead to increased administrative burden for providers.

Furthermore, we would suggest that LD 307 include a requirement for the Department to convene a stakeholder group that would include a CHC dental representative, among others, to lead a conversation around the development of policy recommendations and implementation strategies that are focused on increasing access and improving oral health outcomes. This input is vital to creating an approach that is best for Maine.

Thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any questions.

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