

**State of Maine | 131st Legislature  
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services  
Testimony of Darcy Shargo on behalf of Maine Primary Care Association  
September 16, 2024**

**In Support of the Nomination of Ms. Sara Gagné-Holmes of Readfield to be  
Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Darcy Shargo, Chief Executive Officer of the Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

[Maine Primary Care Association \(MPCA\)](#) is a non-profit membership organization representing Maine's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). For more than 40 years, MPCA has provided technical assistance and training, housed relevant programs and services, and advocated on behalf of Maine's health centers and the hundreds of thousands of patients they serve each year.

FQHCs, also known as Community Health Centers (CHCs), provide high-quality and equitable primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 Maine people (1 in 6 Mainers) at over 80 service sites across the state. MPCA's mission is to champion and maximize the value of Maine's FQHCs for the health and well-being of all Maine people.

Maine's FQHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state and provide care regardless of a patient's insurance status or ability to pay. They are providers of choice in the communities they serve and the health care safety net in Maine.

We interact frequently with the Department of Health and Human Services. In working with Ms. Gagné-Holmes during her time as Deputy Commissioner and Acting Commissioner, we are confident that she is the right choice to lead this important department. We look forward to continuing to work with the State to prioritize policies that study and bolster the tremendously effective —and proven—model of care that FQHCs provide.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please contact me if we can provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darcy Shargo".

Darcy Shargo, MFA  
Chief Executive Officer  
Maine Primary Care Association  
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