

February 3, 2020

Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta ME 04333

Re: LD 2007 (HP 1425) *An Act To Enact the Made for Maine Health Coverage Act and Improve Health Choices in Maine*

Dear Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers Maine Chapter, I am writing to express our support of LD 2007.

From a 30 year career of working in an underserved medical clinic, I have many stories that illustrate the impact of little-to-no health insurance on the health and mental health of people in Maine and how this drives up overall medical costs. Additionally, by improving access to primary medical care and behavioral health care, LD 2007 gives patients access to care early on in their illness, preventing conditions from getting to the “point of no return”, where specialty care and more expensive treatments are needed. To go one step further in reducing barriers to care, we urge you to consider requiring only one copay for medical and behavioral health visits on the same day.

The work of Barbara Starfield and other researchers illustrates that health care systems based on a strong primary care system has reduced costs and better health outcomes. This bill is a step in the right direction.

We urge you to vote yes on LD 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie M. Schirmer, LCSW
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cc: Senator Gideon and Representative Troy Jackson