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February, 14, 2022

Testimony of AARP Maine in support of LD 1636, "An Act to Reduce Prescription Drug Costs by Using International Pricing"

Good afternoon Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. I am here to testify in support of LD 1636, a bill developed by the National Academy for State Health policy,

My name is Paul Armstrong and I am the Volunteer Advocacy lead for AARP Maine. I live in the town of Palermo in Waldo County.

In 2019 Maine passed then LD 1272, "An Act to Increase Access to Low-cost Prescription Drugs." Item 1, chapter 167 of same was the "Wholesale Prescription Drug Importation Program. To the best of my knowledge, an application for a waiver was submitted to Federal DHS and 3 years later still has not yet been acted upon. If the program cannot be instituted as enacted then Mainers have to take alternative actions to reach the results that were voted for. LD 1636 is an alternative approach.

Mainers, and the rest of the USA, are paying about the highest prices globally for medications. A good portion of our state is bordered by a country that pays a fraction in price for medications than we do. If, as "big Pharma" implies, the majority of added costs are for research and development why aren't other global consumers helping fund that?

By passing LD 1636, Maine has the opportunity fulfill the will of the people of Maine; become one of the first in the nation to stand up for fair RX pricing; and help, not only older Mainers, but all Mainers to affordably obtain the medications they need.

On behalf of AARP Maine's 230,000 + members, I ask you to vote in support of this bill. I'd like to thank this committee for its time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Paul Armstrong
AARP Maine Volunteer Advocacy Lead
Palermo Resident

AARP
Real Possibilities

Paul Armstrong
AARP
LD 1636

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