

Good afternoon Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, & Members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

I am Ann Tucker, CEO of Greater Portland Health

I am here today in hopes that you will support LD1787: An Act To Improve the Quality and Affordability of Primary Health Care Provided by Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). The rebasing is vitally important to our patients across Maine. We are concerned about the financial impact that the Maine Department of Health and Human Services' revised payment methodology for primary care services will have on our health centers and the entire FQHC network.

Initial review of our data shows a potential negative financial impact of PC Plus that is over \$100,000 for our health center annually. We will have to make difficult decisions on reducing needed services in our community to offset this loss unless our present MaineCare rate is rebased to cover visit expenses before implementing a new payment model.

Community Health Centers (CHCs) make up the largest independent primary care network in Maine. They provide affordable high quality medical, behavioral health and dental services, as well as a host of other wrap around services that include transportation, translation, and case management services, regardless of the patient's insurance status or ability to pay. CHCs are located in rural and/or urban underserved communities, as a network, we have over 70 service sites

throughout the state, and serve approximately 210,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) annually. The CHC model provides a prototype for how Maine should think about primary care in general, and the model also provides a roadmap for how Maine should think about primary care delivery moving into a post-pandemic world. Rebasing is a win-win solution, as it would keep us steady for pandemic response *and* position us to succeed in the future.

Greater Portland Health operates multiple health centers across Portland, South Portland and Westbrook including our healthcare for the homeless location, three public housing locations, and six school based health centers. Over the past year, we have served over 12,500 community members in the Greater Portland area: providing medical, behavioral health, dental, psychiatric, substance use, and COVID testing and vaccination clinics. Our medical home model includes: transportation, interpretation, community outreach, and a sliding fee scale. Greater Portland health employees 135 staff members and is in the process of advertising 20 additional staff members. In addition to our medical, behavioral health and dental providers, our team includes community health workers, peer support specialists, a case manager, and financial assistance counselors to support connecting patients to services in the health center and in the community. The needs in our community continue to grow. We want to grow to fill these needs. In order to support the comprehensive wrap around care that we believe is needed, we need rebasing of our MaineCare rate.

Thank you for your time and consideration of supporting  
LD1787

Ann Tucker  
Greater Portland Health  
LD 1787  
Greater Portland Health testimony