

**State of Maine | 131st Legislature**  
**Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services**  
**Testimony of Ann Tucker on behalf of Greater Portland Health**  
**March 28, 2023**

Supporting:

**LD 199, “An Act to Improve the Health of Maine Residents by Removing Exclusions to the  
MaineCare Program”**

Sponsored by Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Ann Tucker and I serve as the Chief Executive Officer at Greater Portland Health. Greater Portland Health is one of Maine’s 20 community health centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and part of the largest independent primary care network in the state.

I strongly support LD 199 and thank Speaker Talbot Ross for bringing legislation forward that will ensure all Maine residents with low income have access to MaineCare, regardless of immigration status.

It is important for the health of our low-income community members to be eligible for MaineCare, regardless of immigration status, as it would contribute to healthier community members. It would expand the medical services available to our low-income community members. Without access to insurance, residents have to make difficult and stressful decisions related to their health. One example is the cost of expensive prescription medications and without insurance, a Maine resident may not be able to afford them which leads to increased emergency room utilization and hospital stays for chronic conditions that could be controlled with medication. Offering MaineCare, regardless of immigration status, would allow access to preventative care sooner which in turn should reduce overall emergency medical expenses. . Healthy community members are able to work and positively impact the state’s workforce shortage. All Maine residents deserve to have access to healthcare.

On behalf of Greater Portland Health thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at [atucker@greaterportlandhealth.org](mailto:atucker@greaterportlandhealth.org) with any follow up questions.