



Improving the health status of Maine's seasonal workers and their families by providing culturally appropriate care and services.

**State of Maine | 131st Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Testimony of Hannah Miller on behalf of Maine Mobile Health Program
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, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Hannah Miller and I am the Director of Outreach at Maine Mobile Health Program. We are a federally qualified health center with a specialty focus on Maine's farmworkers, seafood processors, and their families. We offer medical, behavioral health, and nursing care through our mobile units, referrals to dental, vision, and specialty care, pharmacy assistance, and care coordination. We are part of a network of community health centers that operate in rural and under-resourced communities in Maine and believe that expanding access to primary health care must be a priority.

Our patients are vital members of Maine's economy – although many are not originally from Maine, they are the backbone of Maine's food industries. We support access to healthcare for broccoli and potato workers in Aroostook county, blueberry and wreath workers in Hancock and Washington counties, dairy workers in Kennebec and Somerset counties, apple workers in Androscoggin and Kennebec counties, and aquaculture and seafood processors all along the coast from York to Washington county. We are here today because active participation in primary care, including preventative care, helps support people's overall health and wellbeing. It allows them to continue working and contributing to their communities. We support LD 199 because all Maine residents deserve access to healthcare, regardless of class or immigration status. Whether they were born here or moved here, people in every corner of Maine deserve reliable and accessible healthcare without fear of financial burden.



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I vividly remember working with a patient who struggled to decide if she could go to the emergency room because she feared receiving a big bill. Despite struggling to breathe, she questioned if she could afford the higher level of care she really needed. Fear of oppressive financial consequences, for both emergency and routine care, is a concern I witness again and again. Expanding MaineCare coverage to include everyone would reduce stress related to cost and allow people to take better care of their health. They could manage their chronic conditions and routine healthcare needs through primary care settings and use emergency care only when needed.

Health centers are a vital part of Maine's healthcare network, especially in our rural communities. Reimbursements from MaineCare would allow health centers like ours to directly reinvest that money into providing better services for all our patients and increase outreach to people not yet established with our health centers. It would allow for better sustainability and resiliency.

On behalf of Maine Mobile Health Program, thank you for considering our comments. Please feel welcome to contact me directly with any follow-up questions.

Sincerely,
Hannah Miller

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