



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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LD 185,
**“An Act to Establish a Pilot Project for
Medicaid Reimbursement for
Acupuncture Treatment of Substance Abuse Disorders”**
Representative Richard Malaby
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Good morning Senator Brakey, Representative Hymanson and the distinguished members of the Joint Select Committee on Health and Human Services. I am Richard Malaby and I Represent House District 136 which is comprised of eight small coastal communities in eastern Hancock County, the town of Steuben in western Washington County and two sparsely populated unorganized territories in central and western Hancock.

I am before you today to introduce LD 185, An Act to Establish a Pilot Project for Medicaid Reimbursement for Acupuncture Treatment of Substance Abuse Disorders. This bill enables the department under Title 22-A MRS §203, sub -§5 to develop pilot and demonstration projects and to seek such authorization and reimbursement as necessary to undertake those projects.

Furthermore, this bill then specifies the following:

1. By January 1, 2018 the department must apply to CMS for authorization.
2. Treatment must be performed by licensed acupuncturists within the scope of their license according to the auricular acupuncture protocol.
3. The project must be limited to a finite number of patients, be cost neutral and time limited.
4. The department must submit a report to this Committee including any recommendations at the end of the authorized time.

District 136 Gouldsboro, Hancock, Mariaville, Osborn, Sorrento, Steuben, Sullivan, Waltham and Winter Harbor, plus the unorganized territories of East Hancock (part) and Fletchers Landing Township

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This bill was well vetted during the 127th legislature. The proposed legislation before you is essentially the majority report for LD 1090-127th as presented by Rep Sanderson which went under the hammer in both the House and Senate. Numerous language improvements were made during the Committee process and the bill before you incorporates the recommendations of the Maine Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (MAAOM).

Given the horrific price being paid by Maine families as the opioid crisis continues, are we not compelled to embrace every modality that can offer a solution? I believe we need to support and reimburse for a full continuum of treatment options from abstinence based models to medication assisted treatment and for alternative therapies.

I ask for your unanimous support and I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have. Thank you for time and for your vote.