

MaineHealth

MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Susan Doliner, FAHP, MaineHealth In Support of LD 1251, An Act to Encourage Charitable Giving April 15, 2021

Senator Chipman, Representative Terry, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, I am Sue Doliner, Vice President of Development at Maine Medical Center, and I am here to testify in support of LD 1251, An Act to Encourage Charitable Giving, on behalf of the patients and families who seek care at Maine Medical Center, The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital, and other MaineHealth organizations who have directly benefited from the lifesaving impact that charitable gifts have on our organizations.

Follow the dollars – Did you know?

- A) Just imagine the happiest day of your life when you are about to deliver your first child and despite everything you have done to prepare, something goes wrong and you and your baby need the expert care of neonatal intensive care team at The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center (BBCH). A team of professionals, including a neonatologist, specialized pediatric respiratory therapist, medical resident, neonatal nurse and others climb into the specialized ambulance at Maine Medical Center within minutes of the call and head your way. Throughout the 2 hour drive they are on the phone with your doctors and nurses in Farmington staying apprised of your condition and guiding the Farmington care team. They arrive, the baby is delivered and stabilized and yet in need of critical care in Portland. The specialized ambulance serves as a critical care unit on wheels and stands ready to bring your baby back to Portland for the open heart surgery he needs within hours to save his life. This is not a glorified story, this happens more than you can imagine. In fact, the BBCH transports about 275 newborns per year from 15 of Maine's 26 birthing hospitals to the NICU. **What you may not know is that the Neonatal and Pediatric Intensive Care Ambulance was designed and purchased with 100% charitable donations.**
- B) **Because a donor gave a gift of \$500,000 to Maine Medical Center, a young woman, the daughter of a mill worker and whose mom is a nurse in northern Maine, went to medical school on a scholarship provided by Maine Medical Center.** That young woman will one day

be a doctor in Maine caring for people in a rural community just like where she grew up – caring for mill workers, lobstermen, teachers, farmers, hairdressers, shop keepers, grocers, the elderly, and more. She'll bring the newest knowledge and best practice procedures she has learned with her. It all started with the gift. That's where Maine Medical Center comes in – we have a goal of securing 80 such scholarships totaling \$40 million dollars so bright Maine students can afford to go to medical school and one day return to Maine as a caregiver. Tax incentives are an important tool to increase contributions to meet this goal.

The Legislature also plays an important role in this goal. The Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program, administered through the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), is a unique public/private partnership between the State and the medical schools. The Program requires Maine Medical Center and University of New England to privately raise dollar for dollar matching funds to support additional medical students. The Doctors for Maine's Future scholarships provide an important incentive for our philanthropic donors as they see the State invest its scarce resources in the future health of our communities. **We urge the Legislature to sustain funding for this important program (LD 273, "An Act to Sustain the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program").**

The impact and reach of charitable gifts in Maine

There are a lot of families in Maine who count on the support and services provided by the nonprofit sector, including people who are disabled, cannot speak for themselves, and those who are suffering. Further, world-class health care, academia, food pantries, and the arts make up all that is good about Maine. In fact, it drives what is GREAT about Maine.

Frankly, without robust and growing charitable support in our state, Maine will fall behind academically, in health care, in the arts, in all social services (resulting in a high level of subsidized services falling to the State for coverage). This bill provides an additional incentive for those with the foresight and financial means to "lift Maine up" not take it down as the previous deduction limitation has.

Maine's nonprofits are grappling with an unsustainable equation: demand for their services has been skyrocketing, while funding from federal, state,

and county continues to decline ... making nonprofits more dependent on contributions from individuals. At a time when shrinking government resources and growing demands and it is critical to encourage citizens to give more, our rural state had created a disincentive for doing so.

The legislation before you today will lift the cap on charitable giving and may in fact inspire middle and higher income individuals to give to Maine's charities. I know firsthand that people give to charity for many heartfelt, altruistic reasons. Having been at Maine Medical Center for 31 years, I know that while donors do not make charitable gifts only for tax reasons, tax incentives DO make larger gifts possible.

For the Greater Good of Maine

The work of nonprofits has never been in higher demand than it is today, yet the engine that supports them – charitable gifts – is being asked to run with fewer spark plugs and bad gas. Donations are fuel that many nonprofits run on. At Maine Medical Center, philanthropy has made possible:

- MMC/Tufts University Medical School Maine Track scholarships
- Hannaford Center for Simulation and Safety
- The state's only level III neonatal intensive care unit at The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital where the tiniest and most fragile newborns are given a fighting chance as they begin their lives
- Population health initiatives such as our nationally recognized obesity prevention program, Let's Go!, which has been adopted in schools and communities across the state.
- Partnerships with Preble Street caring for the homeless population.
- Modernization of aging facilities
- Angel One Pediatric Critical Care Ambulances

Unlike deductions for mortgage interest and medical expenses, the charitable deduction is the only deduction that does not represent a personal expense for the benefit of the taxpayer. The gift goes entirely to help others. For this reason, it makes sense to "carve out" charitable gifts from the deduction cap because that deduction is unique.

The real beneficiaries of this bill are the people and the natural resources served by Maine's charitable organizations. Support of this bill could go a long way to helping Maine's neediest citizens who need a hand up, to advancing the superior health care we expect and count on each day, creating a sustainable

environment, culture of the arts, and academic strength that assures the sustainability of our State.

Summary Comment

If you believe that charitable contributions should be encouraged for all individuals in this time of great need in Maine, please support this bill.

Thank you for your time and I'd be happy to answer any questions.