



**Testimony of Victoria Weeks Rogers, MD**  
**The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center and *Let's Go!***  
**In Support of LD 1162 –**  
**An Act to Reduce the Incidence of Obesity and Chronic Disease in Maine**  
**April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Good Morning Senator Brakey, Representative Hymanson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Victoria Rogers – I am a Pediatrician at The Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center and the Medical Director of the 5210 Let's Go! Program. Additionally, I am the Associate Director of the American Academy of Pediatrics Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight – where I help develop national recommendations on healthy eating and physical activity.

I am here on behalf of Let's Go! to testify in strong support of LD 1162 – An Act to Reduce the Incidence of Obesity and Chronic Disease in Maine. This bill provides for reimbursement under the MaineCare Program for medical nutritional therapy provided by physicians, licensed dietitians and dietitian nutritionists and reimbursement for obesity treatment medications.

Let's Go! is a community-based childhood obesity prevention program that has been working in Maine for over 10 years. We focus on increasing healthy eating and active living where children and their families live, learn, work and play. We work with over 150 healthcare practices throughout Maine where physicians are using our tools and resources to counsel children and their parents on healthy eating and physical activity. Trying to eat healthy and do it on a budget is *really* hard – we have heard from our patients that they want to talk with us and dieticians about these issues and we want provide this service. LD 1162 would allow us to do this and get reimbursed for our time – seems reasonable to me. And you know this isn't just a good idea – there is strong evidence behind this recommendation. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Board of Obesity Medicine and the US Preventive Task Force have all recommend that physicians and dieticians provide counseling to patients with obesity – and they all recommend multiple visits over months – the US Preventive Task Force recently recommended 26 contact hours with patients around counseling and treating obesity to be the most effective.

Additionally, LD 1162 would allow for reimbursement for medications for obesity treatment – many of which are very promising, showing excellent results for patients.

In summary, Providing Medical Nutritional Therapy - counseling and guiding patients to a healthy diet - and allowing reimbursement for medications that treat obesity will help stem the epidemic of obesity and the ill health consequences associated with obesity. This will help patients live healthier lives. I, and Let's Go!, strongly support LD 1162.

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Thank you for your time and I'm happy to answer any questions you might have.

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