



Rep. Walter Kumiega, District 36, Deer Isle
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Chairman Whittemore, Representative Richardson, distinguished members of the Insurance and Financial Services Committee, I am Representative Walter Kumiega, serving the people of District 36, including Vinalhaven, North Haven, Isle au Haut, Stonington, Deer Isle, Brooklin, part of Mount Desert, Tremont, Swans Island and Frenchboro. I come before you to speak in support of LD 1397, an Act to Establish a Single-payor Health Care System.

The key word in the bill title is System. By any definition, what we have in this country and this state to deliver health care cannot be called a system. The only thing that it does systematically is spend more money while achieving poorer results than the single payor systems available in much of the industrialized world.

This committee just last week voted out legislation in an attempt to ease one of the burdens our current health care pseudo-system places on our society. **Your attempts to reduce insurance costs may or may not make insurance more affordable, but they will do nothing to address the root cause of the problem.** We simply spend too much on health care. We spend too little on prevention, too much on high priced treatments and tests and then we let insurance companies skim significant overhead and a hefty profit off the top. Our current path is unsustainable, and tweaking it is not the answer. The most efficient health care systems in the world are just that, systems. We need a health care system.

Thank you for your time, and I will be happy to attempt to answer any questions.