

LD 1269

132nd Maine

Resolve, to Study the Costs and Funding of a Universal Health Care Plan for Maine

Overview: The 132nd Maine legislature will instruct the Maine Office of Affordable Health Care to study the establishment of a publicly funded, privately and publicly provided, universal health care plan for the residents of Maine.

- ➔ The U.S. health care system is a complicated and inefficient structure that costs too much, delivers inequitable care with poor health outcomes, and leaves many un- or under-insured.
- ➔ **The U.S. ranks last in health outcomes, access, and equity** among 10 developed nations in the 2024 Commonwealth Fund Report, **despite outspending all other countries, each of which provides universal coverage to its residents.**
- ➔ Maine's efforts to analyze universal health care have been hampered by its part-time Legislature, heavy bill load, and **the absence of any state-funded fiscal feasibility study in over two decades** – since 2002.

Key Components of this Resolve:

- **Governance:** Directs the Office of Affordable Health Care (OAHC) to conduct the study in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services.
- **Funding:** Directs the state to provide OAHC with funding to conduct the study.
- **Resources:** To the extent resources are available, authorizes OAHC to solicit the services of one or more outside experts to assist in the study.
- **Staffing:** Specifies that, upon OAHC's request, staffing assistance to complete the study will be provided by the Department of Health and Human Services; the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, Bureaus of Insurance; and the Department of Labor.
- **Model Selection:** Specifies that the OAHC will base its analysis on the All Maine Health Program proposal (see 132nd Maine LR 1436) which is the latest and most detailed plan for a publicly funded, privately provided, universal health care plan for the State. The OAHC may make modifications to that model as it considers necessary.
- **Timeline:** Instructs OAHC to submit its study, recommendations, and any suggested legislation to the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services no later than May 1, 2026.

Based on previous analyses, Maine AllCare believes a universal, publicly funded health care system could provide **more and better care to all residents for about the same money** we currently spend, improving upon the existing system that leaves thousands without affordable, quality care. We anticipate an OAHC study will come to the same conclusion.