



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

2 July 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 1707, "An Act To Reduce the Cost of Care Resulting from Blood-borne Infectious Diseases."

I do not believe it is the government's responsibility to ensure that we provide the safest possible path for a person to participate in dangerous, destructive, and deadly behavior. It is not appropriate for us to force every Maine taxpayer to participate in the purchase of clean needles for people suffering from an addiction, and I am frustrated at the mixed message this bill sends to our children. Are we really willing to tell our kids that they should not do drugs, but if they do, the State will help make sure there is a safe delivery system for the deadly drug? Maine kids need to understand that there is no "safe drug use" anywhere, anytime. They need to understand that drug addiction destroys lives.

We, as the State's leaders and policy makers, cannot send a message of passive consent for these dangerous and destructive activities.

I understand the desire to help people get into treatment. That desire could have been supported if the Legislature had the will to implement a responsible funding mechanism for Medicaid expansion. Addiction is one of the greatest destructive forces facing our families today. Maine's families are Maine's future – they need to succeed and they need to prosper. That is why I have been working with the Department of Health and Human Services to make it a priority to invest in evidence-based treatment options that will produce the best outcomes for individuals dealing with addiction.

Let us continue to engage our families and communities and prioritize quality treatment rather than participating in the purchase of drug paraphernalia and sending the wrong message to our kids.

For this reason, I return LD 1707 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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