

## **LD 172, An Act To Improve Prescription Information Access**

### **SUMMARY:**

This bill requires a 2-dimensional machine-scannable barcode that allows a patient to digitally access prescription information to appear on the prescription label. The bill directs the Maine Board of Pharmacy to adopt rules to implement the requirement by January 1, 2022 and designates the rules as routine technical.

### **LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:**

The HCIFS Committee considered this proposal in the 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature (LD 2116, An Act to Improve Prescription Information Access) and voted the bill “Ought Not to Pass.” In a letter to the Maine Board of Pharmacy, the Committee asked the board to reach out to pharmacies, pharmacists and other licensees to encourage that they make consumers who are visually-impaired aware of the existing accommodations that are available to improve their access to and understanding of prescription drug labeling information. The letter asked the board to respond to HCIFS by January 15, 2021. While the outreach efforts of the board were delayed by the pandemic, the board did send a communication to all licensees on February 5, 2021. The board also responded by [letter](#) to the committee on February 11, 2021.

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### **ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

1. Consider recent communication to pharmacies and other licensees related to best practices for assisting visually-impaired patients? Consider availability of other products (beyond bar code or QR code) that can be used to assist visually-impaired patients?
2. Consider technology and financial challenges to pharmacists to implement requirement in bill? Consider limited space on label and requirements for labeling under federal law and regulations?
3. If bill moves forward, consider whether rules should be routine technical or major substantive? Major substantive rules are subject to legislative approval before final adoption.

### **FISCAL INFORMATION:**

Minor cost increase-Other Special Revenue Funds

Any additional costs to the Maine Board of Pharmacy to implement the requirements of the bill are expected to be minor and can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.