

May 6, 2015

Trish Riley, Executive Director  
National Academy for State Health Policy  
10 Free Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Portland, ME 04101

Dear Trish:

I'm happy to provide the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) a letter that describes how the Maine Health Access Foundation (MeHAF) has worked with our state legislative leadership and NASHP to promote education, networking opportunities and shared learning opportunities that can promote public policy related to health and health care issues. As you know, one approach MeHAF has used is to support the participation of legislators and senior legislative analyst staff in the NASHP State Health Policy Conference.

Like many states, Maine has a citizen legislature comprised of lawmakers with varied professional backgrounds, few of whom with expertise in health and health care. Yet these policymakers are regularly called upon to assess and make key policy decisions about the management of complex programs, like Medicaid and how the state responds to the significant changes in health care delivery and insurance driven by the Affordable Care Act.

As a nonpartisan national organization, NASHP is the only organization of its kind that provides education and technical assistance on the wide array of health issues that confront states. The foundation therefore made a decision to work with Maine's legislative leadership to arrange scholarship support for a bi-partisan delegation of legislators and legislative staff to attend NASHP's annual conference.

MeHAF has now provided scholarship support for many years. Over time, we've observed that legislators gain new knowledge and benefit greatly from networking with their peers. In particular, the peer to peer networking has helped spark new ideas that can help legislators consider new ways to improve access to quality, affordable health care.

We anticipate reaching out to legislative leadership once again to help support a bi-partisan delegation to attend the 2015 conference in Dallas, Texas.

I know NASHP will be reaching out to health foundations to highlight this valuable educational opportunity for policymakers, and I'd be happy to have you share this letter that summarizes our experience in sponsoring the participation of legislators and staff from our own state.

Sincerely,



Wendy J. Wolf, MD, MPH  
President & CEO