



THE BINGHAM PROGRAM

Testimony by the Bingham Program in Support of L.D. 258, An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025

**Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee and
the Health and Human Services Committee
Public Hearing: February 22, 2022**

Senator Rotundo, Senator Baldacci, Representative Sachs, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services Committees, my name is Morgan Hynd, and I am the Director of the Bingham Program, a charitable endowment held at Tufts' Medical Center, established in 1932 to promote health and advance medicine in Maine.

I am testifying today to encourage the Committees to add the necessary funding into the budget to ensure Maine CDC's School Oral Health Program has the resources to expand to all schools by 2025, as enacted last legislative session.

In partnership with several other Maine charitable foundations, the Bingham Program has been a long-time supporter of efforts to improve the oral health of children in Maine. However, despite decades of investment by groups like Bingham, we have seen little progress in improving children's oral health. While our investments can seed important innovation, we do not have the resources to bring that innovation to scale, or to even ensure the most basic level of care for our kids. Only the State of Maine is in the position to do that. The Maine CDC's School Oral Health Program is the most efficient, scalable way to improve the oral health of Maine children, and, when adequately funded, has a successful track record.

I ask all members of both Committees to include the necessary funding in this budget to allow the School Oral Health program to expand to all public schools in Maine by 2025. This modest investment will help to improve children's oral health in our state for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical piece of funding.