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17 March 2023

Senator Joseph Baldacci
Representative Michelle Meyer
Members of the Health And Human Services Committee

Dear Chairman Baldacci, Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association regarding LD 445, Resolve, Directing the Department Of Health And Human Services to Apply for a Waiver from the Federal Government for the Medicaid Limitation on Payment to a Facility with More Than 16 Inpatient Beds for Psychiatric Treatment.

As you are aware, Medicaid is currently prohibited from paying for care provided by "institutions for mental disease" (IMDs) which have more than 16 inpatient beds. There is a waiver process however that would allow the Maine Department of Health and Human Services to apply to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for this waiver. This waiver would then allow psychiatric hospitals, regardless of the number of beds, to be paid for the treatment of individuals in crisis and experiencing an exacerbation of their illness.

We are all well aware of the inadequacy of available mental health treatment, both in the state of Maine, and nationwide. This artificial, discriminatory and arbitrary impediment to access to care for some of our most vulnerable citizens is unconscionable and would be rectified by passage of LD 445.

I strongly request that you vote in favor of this Resolve; thank you.

Sincerely,

Constance W. Jordan, ANP, PMHNP
President, Maine Nurse Practitioner Association