

April 10, 2023

Re: Testimony in Support of [LD 1161, "An Act to Fund Free Health Clinics"](#)

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am Lacey Gale, PhD, LCSW, a psychotherapist in private practice and a pro bono outpatient behavioral health provider at the Oasis Free Clinics in Brunswick, and I am writing in support of LD 1161. The mission of the Oasis Free Clinics (Oasis) is to strengthen our community by providing no-cost medical, dental and prescription assistance services to our uninsured neighbors in need. Oasis serves adults who live in Freeport, Durham, Brunswick, Harpswell and Sagadahoc County who are at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

For almost 30 years, Oasis has been a part of the Midcoast's safety net, providing free medical and dental care to those who fall through the cracks of Maine's healthcare system. Unfortunately, there are still gaps, especially for those who experience poverty, have limited literacy skills, and who bring complex lives into the exam room.

Since 2019, Oasis has had the privilege of serving as the primary medical and dental home for 175 adults who have immigrated or are seeking asylum and live in the southern Midcoast. I have been providing pro bono behavioral health services for trauma affected asylum seekers through Oasis since 2020 and have observed positive outcomes for patients' well-being as well as increased capacity to be contributing members of their communities.

Oasis has never received state nor federal funding. They have been supported by individuals, religious organizations, businesses, the United Way, and private foundations. I ask that you join them by voting yes to support LD 1161 so that the free clinics are able to help more people in our communities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lacey Gale, PhD, LCSW
Woolwich, ME