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Testimony of Senator Mattie Daughtry in Support of
**LD 2043, An Act to Add the State of Maine to the Compact for Licensing
Physician Assistants**
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage,
Insurance, and Financial Affairs*
January 9, 2024

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Affairs, my name is Mattie Daughtry, and I proudly represent Senate District 23, which includes Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth. Today I am pleased to testify in strong support of [LD 2043](#), “An Act to Add the State of Maine to the Compact for Licensing Physician Assistants.”

The Physician Assistant Compact is an optional agreement between states that will allow PAs with a license in a compact member state to more easily become authorized to practice in any other member state. A state opts to become a member of the compact by adopting the Physician Assistant Compact through its legislative process. That’s what we are trying to accomplish here today.

There are numerous benefits to becoming a member of the Physician Assistant Compact. According to the [American Academy of Physician Assistants](#) (AAPA), the Compact:

- Facilitates multistate practice.
- Improves access to PA services.
- Improves continuity of care.
- Supports relocating military spouses.
- Expands employment opportunities.
- Preserves state licensure systems.
- Enhances public safety.
- Increases collaboration.¹

Whether it’s mental health counselors and therapists, dentists, primary care doctors, physician assistants, or medical specialists, Mainers are having a difficult time accessing health care

¹ <https://www.pacomact.org/siteassets/pa-licensure-compact/pdf/brochure.pdf>

services.² As a result of the pandemic, the health care workforce shrank and patients delayed seeking care for chronic or untreated conditions, sometimes resulting in more complex and complicated health problems. In fact, from 2019 to 2022, the number of physician assistants declined from 840 to 770 in Maine.

Kristin Jackson, one of my Brunswick constituents, told *The Portland Press Herald*, “It’s just really frustrating. America is an advanced country with a supposedly advanced health care system. It can make you feel really helpless.” It took 10 months to get an appointment with a dermatologist so that she could get a diagnosis and treatment for a skin rash. When she spoke to *The Herald*, Kristin had also been in the middle of a months-long process to schedule a preventive colonoscopy screening.

When I reflect on Kristin’s experience, and the experiences of my family and friends, I know that we have to take action to address the shortage of health care professionals and providers in Maine. We can take one of these actions today.

If Maine joins the Physician Assistant Compact, then we can start to draw more PAs to the state. PAs are critical for the health care workforce, and many doctors rely on PAs to help take care of their patients. PAs make rounds and perform patient exams, diagnose illnesses, assist in surgeries, order and interpret labs and X-rays, prescribe medications, develop and manage treatment plans, and advise patients on preventative care.

With more PAs living and working in Maine, we can help Mainers access the essential, vital health care services that they need – and deserve.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 2043.

Thank you,



Mattie Daughtry

Assistant Senate Majority Leader, Senate District 23

Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth

² <https://www.pressherald.com/2023/10/22/maine-has-a-health-care-access-crisis-and-its-making-us-sicker/>