

MaineHealth

MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth In Support of LD 2043, “An Act to Add the State of Maine to the Compact for Licensing Physician Assistants” Tuesday, January 9, 2024

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Sarah Calder, Senior Government Affairs Director at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 2043, “An Act to Add the State of Maine to the Compact for Licensing Physician Assistants.”

MaineHealth is an integrated non-profit health care system that provides a continuum of health care services to communities throughout Maine and New Hampshire. Every day, our almost 23,000 care team members support our vision of “Working Together so Our Communities are the Healthiest in America” by providing a range of services from primary and specialty physician services to a continuum of behavioral health care services, community and tertiary hospital care, home health care and a lab.

Like health care systems across the country, MaineHealth has invested heavily in retaining our current workforce, but also in creative and innovative solutions to “grow our own,” including developing entry level employees in front line positions from Environmental Services to training tomorrow’s physicians. Even with those investments, we are still challenged with nearly 2,500 open positions, in addition to almost 140 physicians and 130 advanced practice providers. Unfortunately, even if we filled these provider positions, it would only partially improve patient access as the volume of patients continues to increase.

The legislation before you today could help ease the challenges related to transferring licensure to Maine as we work to recruit out-of-state health care professionals to meet our growing need. The health care workforce shortage is significant, and we look forward to working with you this Session to advance policy changes, like LD 2043, that attract and retain individuals to meet the increased workforce demands and increase access to care.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.