



**Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine**  
*The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers*

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**Testimony in Support of LD 2043**  
**An Act to Add the State of Maine to the Compact for Licensing**  
**Physician Assistants**

**Sponsored by Representative Cloutier**

January 11, 2024

Good afternoon Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and esteemed members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. My name is Malory Shaughnessy and I am the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services. The Alliance is the statewide association representing the majority of Maine's community based mental health and substance use treatment providers. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

On behalf of the Alliance, I am here today to speak in support of LD 2043 "An Act to Add the State of Maine to the Compact for Licensing Physician Assistants." As members of Maine's legislature and specifically, as members of this committee, you don't need me to tell you that Maine is experiencing a severe workforce shortage, especially in regards to healthcare.

Given this severe healthcare workforce shortage, we must be innovative and think outside the boxes we are currently restrained by. One way of doing this is to reduce the barriers to licensure in Maine for experienced professionals wanting to relocate here, or to provide telehealth services here. We learned a lot about telehealth during the Covid Pandemic, and we know that using it can increase access to care, especially in our rural areas.

Currently in Maine, we have growing waiting lists for much needed services such as Medication Management for those dealing with the challenges of severe and persistent mental illness. On any day, there are hundreds waiting to get access to this service, with wait times of several months to schedule a first visit.

The legislation before you today could help ease the challenges related to transferring licensure to Maine, and begin to reduce these waitlists. The health care workforce shortage is significant, and we look forward to working with you to find solutions, like LD 2043, that attract and retain individuals to meet the increased workforce demands and increase access to care.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. I urge an ought to pass vote on this bill, and am happy to bring any requested information to the work session.