



Maine Medical  
Association



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

**AND**

**THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION**

**IN SUPPORT OF**

**[L.D. 2080](#), An Act to Create a Universal Exclusion List for All Forms of Gambling in the State**

Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs  
Room 208, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine  
Wednesday, January 17, 2024

Good afternoon Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. My name is Anne Sedlack, and I am the Director of Advocacy for the Maine Medical Association. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 2080, An Act to Update the Sex Education and Consent Curriculum on behalf of the Maine Medical Association and the Maine Osteopathic Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

This year MMA and MOA's legislative committees have joined together to advocate from one voice. And our Committee has determined that it is important to submit testimony in support of LD 2080.

We believe it is important to raise awareness on the idea that addictions take many forms. According to the American Psychiatric Association<sup>1</sup>, warning signs of gambling addiction include:

- Restless or irritable when trying to cut down or stop gambling.
- Repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back on or stop gambling.
- Frequent thoughts about gambling (such as reliving past gambling or planning future gambling).
- Often gambling when feeling distressed.
- After losing money gambling, often returning to get even. (This is referred to as "chasing" one's losses.)
- Lying to hide gambling activity.
- Risking or losing a close relationship, a job, or a school or job opportunity because of gambling.
- Relying on others to help with money problems caused by gambling

Like all addictions, gambling addictions have the ability to cause despair to the individual, to family and friends, and to our whole community. Maine needs to be vigilant about an surge of this type of addiction because of the increased access to gambling, like sports betting, in the State. This is not just an assumption but is something that has already happened in neighboring states that have passed sports betting laws.<sup>2</sup>

We believe that this bill is a good step in ensuring our community members with a gambling addiction have the care that they need. Mainers who already know that they have a problem can admit to it and volunteer to say, "Don't let me gamble." This is an important step in recovery and something that should be easy for this Legislature to support.

In addition to this bill, we would ask the Committee please remain vigilant to the keep risks of gambling addiction that might be unleashed by the expansion in Maine. Please ask for and find evidence-based warnings to advertise. Please support the 211 Helpline, listening closely to what they have to say about incoming calls related to gambling addiction.

Thank you for considering the support of Maine's physician community about L.D. 2080. We urge an "ought to pass" vote on this bill. We would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

Thank you,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/gambling-disorder/what-is-gambling-disorder>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/health/mental-health/gambling-addiction-sports-betting-legal-maine-experts-concerned-mental-health/97-978c2227-5b0a-4992-b210-f5bb5d21a6e7>.

