

25+ Years of *Independent Practice* as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine

Re: LD 353 L.D. 353 “An Act Concerning Substance Use Disorder, Treatment, Recovery, Prevention, and Education.”

January 22, 2024

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and the members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association to support the Health and Human Services Committee Amendment to S.P. 160, L.D. 353, “An Act Concerning Substance Use Disorder, Treatment, Recovery, Prevention, and Education.”

The proposed amendments to the study by the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future are needed to consider the healthcare community’s response to the treatment of Substance Use Disorder (SUD). The response to SUD must be conducted in an evidence-based and destigmatized manner to promote the recovery, health, and well-being of persons and families impacted by SUD.

The amendment to L.D. 353 examines clinical practice. I am a Family Nurse Practitioner in a primary care clinic in Portland. My panel of patients includes mothers with SUD and their children. It is an honor to serve families and to gain trust through empathy and clinical expertise. Patient care is holistic and comprehensive, conducted with dignity without the stigma of illness. As an example of comprehensive care, we screen for food insecurity in our clinics at every visit. Recent studies found that 70% of persons with addiction also experienced food insecurity, and only 16% of primary care practices screen for food insecurity. The SUD response needs to include the whole person, the barriers to care, and the path to wellness.

SUD is complex, requiring a thoughtful, planned response with interventions that will impact generations. The amendment to L.D. 353 will strengthen this response and outcomes.

Sincerely,

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