



Mar 4, 2025

Committee on Health and Human Services
Maine State Legislature
Augusta, ME

Strong Support for Maine LD 689: Funding for Northern New England Poison Control

To the Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

On behalf of the Maine Association of School Nurses (MASN), I am writing to express our strong and unequivocal support for LD 689, which seeks to secure vital funding for the Northern New England Poison Control Center (NNEPC).

As school nurses, we are on the frontlines of student health and safety. We understand firsthand the critical role that the NNEPC plays in protecting our children and communities from the dangers of poisoning. The NNEPC provides invaluable, 24/7 expert advice and support, not only to healthcare professionals, but also directly to families and schools.

Here's why LD 689 funding is so crucial:

- **Rapid and Expert Guidance:** In situations involving potential poisoning, time is of the essence. The NNEPC's immediate access to toxicological expertise can mean the difference between life and death. Their ability to provide rapid, accurate guidance is indispensable. As stated by the NNEPC, they provide "fast, accurate information and expert advice" to address poison-related concerns. (Northern New England Poison Center, n.d.-a).
 - Citation: Northern New England Poison Center. (n.d.-a). *About the Northern New England Poison Center*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nnepc.org/about>
- **Preventative Education:** The NNEPC is not just reactive; they are proactive. They provide essential educational resources and outreach programs that help prevent poisonings before they occur. This is particularly important in schools, where we strive to create a safe learning environment. The NNEPC provides "education around general poison prevention tips, medication safety, drug abuse/misuse, suicide prevention, cannabis" (Northern New England Poison Center, n.d.-b).
 - Citation: Northern New England Poison Center. (n.d.-b). *Poison Prevention at the Northern New England Poison Center*. Retrieved from: <https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/poison-prevention>
- **Community Resource:** The NNEPC serves as a vital resource for all members of our community, including parents, caregivers, and first responders. Their services are essential in rural areas where access to specialized medical care may be limited. The NNEPC serves Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Information regarding their funding sources, also shows that they are supported by Maine state funding. (Northern New England Poison Center, n.d.-a).



- **Protecting Children:** Children are particularly vulnerable to accidental poisonings. The NNEPC's specialized knowledge and experience in pediatric toxicology are essential for ensuring the safety of our students. Information from the NNEPC confirms that while poisonings occur in all age groups, children are very vulnerable. (Northern New England Poison Center, n.d.-b).

Without adequate funding, the NNEPC's ability to provide these critical services will be severely compromised. This would have a devastating impact on the health and safety of Maine's children and families.

The Maine Association of School Nurses urges the legislature to recognize the immense value of the Northern New England Poison Control Center and to fully support LD 689. Investing in poison control is an investment in the health and well-being of our entire state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alana Trottier BS, RN, CCRN President

Maine Association of School Nurses

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Citations:

- Northern New England Poison Center. (n.d.-a). *About the Northern New England Poison Center*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nnepc.org/about>
- Northern New England Poison Center. (n.d.-b). *Poison Prevention at the Northern New England Poison Center*. Retrieved from: <https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/poison-prevention>