



**State of Maine | 131st Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Labor
Testimony of Ann Tucker on behalf of Greater Portland Health
March 12, 2025**

In Support Of:

LD 703, “An Act to Establish a Health Care Gap Year Program for Recent College Graduates”

Sponsored by Rep. Rana, Sen. Baldacci, Sen. Bennett, Sen. Bernard, Rep. Dhalac, Rep. Dodge, Sen. Ingwersen,
Sen. Reny and Rep. Skold

Senator Rotundo, Senator Bailey, Representative Gattine, and Representative Mathieson, and members of the Committee On Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Ann Tucker, Chief Executive Officer of Portland Community Health Center dba Greater Portland Health, one of Maine’s 20 community health centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and part of the largest independent primary care network in the state.

Greater Portland Health provides high quality patient-centered healthcare that is accessible and affordable. sensitive. We currently serve over 16,000 active patients. We provide medical, mental health, oral health, substance use treatment, recuperative care and vision services to members of our community, regardless of their health insurance status or ability to pay. We have 17 locations across Portland, South Portland and Westbrook.

It has been incredibly challenging to hire Medical Assistants since the pandemic. Over the last two years, the clinical gap year program has been instrumental in our ability to provide clinical support to medical providers and patients, retain clinical team members, and expand patient access in our community. The candidates that apply for this opportunity through the Roux program are exceptional, motivated to learn, caring and committed to healthcare. We are again in the process of interviewing and hiring candidates to work with us for the next year or two. We also hope the team members who have worked here will return to either the health center or another medical organization in Maine once they finish their postgraduate degree.

On behalf of Greater Portland Health, thank you for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly at ATucker@greaterportlandhealth.org with any follow-up questions.

Sincerely,

Ann Tucker

Ann Tucker
Chief Executive Officer