

**State of Maine | 131st Legislature**  
**Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services**  
**March 13, 2025**

Supporting:  
**LD 806, "An Act to Amend the Scope of Practice for Expanded Function Dental Assistants"**

Sponsored by Representative Mastraccio

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Annick Metoule, Oral Health Program Manager at Maine Primary Care Association (MPCA).

MPCA is a membership organization that includes Maine's Community Health Centers (CHCs), also known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). Maine's FQHCs make up the largest independent primary care network in the state, providing high quality, affordable, and accessible primary and preventive medical, behavioral, and dental health services for over 200,000 people (1 in 6 Mainers) at more than 80 service delivery sites in all 16 Maine counties.

MPCA supports LD 806, which seeks to amend the scope of practice for Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs). Maine's FQHCs are acutely aware of the healthcare challenges faced by many Mainers, particularly those who are low-income and rely on MaineCare.

As we know, Maine is experiencing workforce shortages in many health care professions, and dental providers are no exception. Access to dental care in Maine has become increasingly difficult, with many patients facing long wait lists and traveling significant distances to see a provider. With the recent expansion of MaineCare dental coverage for adult patients, the demand for services has grown. Unfortunately, the existing dental workforce is not sufficient to meet this rising need, leaving many without timely access to essential dental care, sometimes resulting in more serious health issues.

While we recognize that expanding the scope of practice for EFDAs is not an end solution for the dentist shortage, it offers a crucial piece of the puzzle. EFDAs play a vital role streamlining the delivery of care by reducing wait times and improving overall access to dental services. By empowering EFDAs to take on additional responsibilities, increased efficiency continues, and dentists can focus on more complex procedures. This collaborative approach is essential as we strive to meet the dental needs of our communities.

On behalf of Maine's Community Health Centers, thank you for considering my comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any follow up questions.

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