

**Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine Testimony on
LD 532 An Act to Protect Health Care Workers by Addressing Assaults In Health Care Settings**

March 17, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

My name is Sara Ratcliffe, and I serve as Executive Director of the Home Care and Hospice Alliance of Maine. The Alliance is submitting testimony in support of LD 532, An Act to Protect Health Care Workers by Addressing Assaults In Health Care Settings.

The Home Care and Hospice Alliance of Maine is a network of home care, hospice, and personal care providers across our State delivering in-home care to older adults and disabled individuals of all ages, allowing them to stay in their homes and communities.

The Alliance would like to thank Representative Stover for introducing this bill, which broadens the statute to ensure protection for all health care workers employed by state-licensed entities.

Those who provide in-home care walk into environments that are inherently unpredictable. Unlike the controlled setting of a hospital or clinic, home care workers are frequently alone, providing essential services in private residences. This isolation leaves them profoundly vulnerable to assault.

The data speaks for itself. A recent survey of our members reveals a disturbing reality: of those who reported being assaulted while providing home care, 25% were threatened with harm, 38% suffered physical assault, 50% experienced sexual harassment, and a shocking 100% have endured verbal abuse from patients or their family members.

These statistics are not mere numbers; they represent the real and present danger faced by our home care workers who dedicate their lives to caring for others. The tragic loss of a life in Connecticut, a home health worker murdered by her patient in 2023, is a stark and painful reminder of the human cost of inaction. While Connecticut has responded with legislation providing grant funding for safety improvements, mandatory training, and more comprehensive patient referral information, including criminal and psychiatric history, we must prioritize the safety of our workers to prevent such losses here.

This bill is a necessary step toward ensuring that home care workers receive the same protections as their counterparts in other health care settings. We urge your support to protect those who dedicate their lives to caring for others.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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