



**Maine Medical
Association**



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
AND
THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION**

In Support Of

LD. 581 An Act to Fund the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program

Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development.
Room 220, Cross Building, Augusta, Maine
Tuesday, March 6, 2025

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, my name is Dr. Kendra Paradis, I'm a resident of Orrington, and I'm here to testify in support of LD 581, An Act To Fund the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program on behalf of the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

I am a 6th-generation Mainer from Hampden, and my genetic roots are in the Saint John Valley. I am a graduate of the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine and a practicing family physician and medical director of primary care at St. Joseph's Hospital in Bangor.

I received the Doctor's for Maine's Future Scholarship from 2011-2015 because I grew up, went to high school, college, and medical school here, and because since the moment I decided on medicine as a career, I knew Maine would be where I practiced. I chose to attend the University of New England because the school would train me to deliver

patient-centered primary care in a rural setting. I knew I would stay here because I saw family members see a new doctor every couple of years and the length of time it took the doctor to pay off their loans by practicing in a rural area. I saw them struggle to explain their medical history to a new provider each time, only to know the process would repeat again soon. The care in the interim, though not subpar by any means, was not based on a therapeutic relationship that had grown over the years. We deserve doctors who want to be here not just long enough to pay back their debt but for a lifetime. We need providers who wish to take care of generations of families, know their patients' medical and personal histories, and become a part of the community.

It is my goal to be that physician, a goal that can be realized because the scholarship lessened the pressure on me to enter a specialty or practice in an area that would compensate me more. Thanks to this scholarship, I have been able to become a family physician in the town I grew up in, become a homeowner, start a family, and begin building my practice for patients whom I aim to care for many decades. I have balanced the demands of clinical care with my passion for leadership and advocacy for family physicians, including system changes to reduce physician burnout. What I want you to realize, though, is that my story is not unique. This is the story of many of the other recipients of this scholarship.

I urge you to vote in support of this legislation. Thank you for your time, and I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Kendra Paradis, DO