

**Testimony from Dr. Jane Carreiro Before the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs**

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

**Public Hearing: March 31, 2025**

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, my name is Dr. Jane Carreiro, Dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of New England. I am submitting this written testimony on behalf of UNE, requesting that the Legislature fund the Doctors for Maine's Future program. This is an effective program that attracts and retains physician talent to rural Maine communities. Unfortunately, no funding was dedicated to this important program in the proposed biennial budget.

Every year since this program was established in 2009, Maine students attending UNE's College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNE COM) have received this scholarship, which provides \$25,000 in tuition assistance for each of their four years of medical school, totaling \$100,000 in aid. This helps reduce their considerable debt load and encourages them to stay in Maine to practice after graduation and their residencies. UNE COM students who receive the Doctors for Maine's Future scholarships are placed in the Dirigo Scholars track program which focuses on rural primary care workforce development. As Dirigo Scholars, they are assigned a rural clinical mentor; participate in focused training at Northern Light EMMC during years 1 and 2; are enrolled in the Care for Underprivileged Pathways (CUP) program; and complete third year rotations at Northern Light EMMC.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of UNE's Doctors for Maine's Future graduates are now employed in Maine. This includes many students who had to complete their residencies outside of Maine due to lack of residency slots here, but then chose to move back to Maine to live and work. Each year, we hear from these students that their desire to stay in Maine is strong, and their gratitude for this assistance is even stronger.

Their passion for medicine and Maine is the strongest case that can be made for renewing funding for this important program. I can attest that this program is a valuable tool for convincing Maine students to study and train in their home state. Every dollar from the State of Maine through FAME has to be matched by private donations, which doubles the number of scholarships that can be awarded. There are few such public/private partnerships that are more compelling or more successful. For the benefit of future Maine students, and the Maine citizens they will care for, I encourage you to include funding in the budget for the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship program.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jane E. Carreiro  
VP Health Affairs & Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine