

Kerri Vacher
Belfast
LD 1128

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Dear Committee Member,

I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1128, a bill to modernize the prescribing rights of Naturopathic Doctors (NDs) in the state of Maine. This bill is critical to improving healthcare access, lowering costs, and ensuring that Mainers can receive the most comprehensive and efficient care possible.

As you may know, Naturopathic Doctors are highly trained professionals who complete extensive education and clinical training, including coursework in pharmacology and medical sciences. However, despite this robust training, NDs are currently restricted in their ability to prescribe certain medications. LD 1128 seeks to correct this disparity and ensure that the scope of prescribing rights for NDs is aligned with the training they receive in school, which would greatly enhance their ability to care for patients. I can personally attest to the robust nature of Naturopathic Medical training as I was originally trained as an ND and went back to school to complete additional training as a Family Nurse Practitioner. This was an expense and waste of my personal resources. It also kept me away from caring for my community for three years while I was in school. Nurse Practitioners have less comprehensive training than NDs yet have a full and robust prescription scope- as they should! NDs should be given this prescriptive scope as well.

There are several compelling reasons why this legislation is essential:

Access to Life-Saving Medications: NDs in Maine would be empowered to prescribe life-saving medications such as rescue inhalers, blood pressure medications, and blood sugar management drugs. This would allow patients to receive timely prescriptions from their trusted healthcare provider, preventing unnecessary delays and gaps in treatment.

Cost Reduction for Patients: Currently, many patients are required to visit multiple healthcare providers to manage their medications, leading to higher healthcare costs, increased time spent in appointments, and potential confusion about treatment plans. By allowing NDs to prescribe medications, patients would benefit from more streamlined care, reducing the need for multiple visits and lowering overall healthcare expenses.

Preventive Care and Medication Management: NDs specialize in preventive medicine and holistic health approaches. By supporting LD 1128, we enable NDs to help patients better manage their medications, including tapering off drugs safely when appropriate, under professional guidance. This would contribute to improved patient outcomes and healthier communities.

I strongly urge you to support LD 1128. It is an important step toward modernizing healthcare in Maine, expanding access to life-saving medications, and reducing costs for patients. Allowing NDs to fully utilize their training and expertise would be a win for both patients and the healthcare system.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your support for this crucial piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Kerri A Vacher

Kerri Vacher, ND, FNPC
Family Nurse Practitioner