

Testimony in Support:

LD 1166 “An Act to Change the Professional Title and Identification of Physician Assistants to Physician Associates”

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, my name is Laura Withers, MD. I am a Portland resident, and I practice medicine in Portland, Maine. I am submitting testimony in support of LD 1166 “An Act to Change the Professional Title and Identification of Physician Assistants to Physician Associates”.

I am a Physician who works closely with Physician Assistants and have done so throughout my career. I am in support of The Maine Academy of Physician Associate’s effort to change the title of Physician Assistant to Physician Associate. To begin with, this provides clarity by keeping their professional title current with national standards as the American Academy of Physician Associates changed their title in 202. This was done after extensive research determined that there was a misconception among patients that PAs only “assist” physicians. This tends to create confusion and concern when a physician is not physically present for the duration of a PA’s work. This is a disservice to patients and diminishes the actual work and competencies of these providers. Changing of their profession’s title does not change what PAs do or impact their scope of practice but highlights to patients the value of the care they will receive from them. Both physicians and PAs remain deeply dedicated to revolutionizing healthcare in our nation through collaborative, patient-focused medical care.

We remain united with our healthcare colleagues in a shared mission to provide safe and effective care to all patients through a patient-centered and team-based approach which is why I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1166.

Thank you,

[Hand Signature]

NAME