

Stephanie Small  
Yarmouth  
LD 961

April 14, 2025

Senator Donna Bailey  
Representative Lori Gramlich  
Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee  
Room 220  
Cross State Office Building, Augusta, Maine 04330

Dear Chairman Bailey, Chairman Gramlich and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself in support of LD961, An Act to Address Maine's Health Care Workforce Shortage and Improve Access to Care.

I am a Nurse Practitioner who is the actual supervisor to many Nurse Practitioners. I have also been the supervisor Maine law requires for licensing purposes to many other Nurse Practitioners new to practicing in Maine. These are two different roles. The first role, which exists intentionally in our healthcare systems, provides actual supervisory oversight as part of employment. The second role, currently required by law, requires no actual supervision, just paperwork. Do not confuse the two. One is meaningful collaboration inherent in today's integrated healthcare delivery. The other is unnecessary bureaucratic red tape.

A couple of years ago, in my role as an actual supervisor, I attempted to hire a well-trained new graduate Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) to provide the same women's health care I provide. The law prevented me (a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner with over 20 years of experience) and our Medical Director (an ObGyn Physician) from being the FNP's supervisor for licensing purposes, even though we would be her actual supervisors for her job. You can appreciate the absurdity of current law. As a result, we were unable to hire the FNP and have been unable to hire FNP's since then, including ones I have volunteered my time to precept while they were FNP graduate students training at the University of Southern Maine. Also absurdly, I can hire a new graduate Certified Nurse Midwife to do the same job and no supervision for licensing purposes is required.

The current law was a political compromise decades ago. Since then, we have seen there is no benefit to this performative licensing requirement. It does not improve patient safety or outcomes. Instead, Maine law is preventing Maine health centers from hiring Maine trained Nurse Practitioners. This is real harm to our graduates and the Maine citizens who lose access to these highly trained health care providers. It's time to fix this inappropriate barrier to practice. I urge you to unanimously support LD951.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Small, PhD, WHNP, ANP  
Yarmouth, ME