



LD 961 An Act to Address Maine's Health Care Workforce Shortage and Improve Access to Care

Testimony in Support April 15, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson, I am here today speaking in support of this bill on behalf of the Organization of Maine Nursing Leadership (OMNL) and Maine's Nursing Action Coalition (MeNAC).

OMNL represents nursing leaders from patients to policy. It is a professional organization that directs the course for nursing by promoting sound healthcare policies within our organizations and at the local, state, and national level. Towards this Mission, OMNL creates an environment that encourages collaborative partnerships.

This bill repeals the provision of law requiring that a certified nurse practitioner who qualifies as an advanced practice registered nurse must practice for at least 24 months under the supervision of a physician or supervising nurse practitioner or be employed by a clinic or hospital that has a medical director who is a licensed physician. The bill also eliminates the supervising nurse practitioner designation, which is no longer needed.

The safety and quality of nurse practitioner (NP) competency-based education has consistently been demonstrated through more than 50 years of research. There is evidence to support that longer timeframes to licensure will be detrimental to improving access, especially in rural and underserved areas: Clinicians of all health disciplines are more likely to work in rural and underserved areas if they start working in these areas earlier in their careers.

Government leaders in Maine acknowledged that this supervisory period was a barrier to access to care when the pandemic began when all supervisory restrictions were lifted in March of 2020 as part of the Emergency COVID legislation. Nurse practitioners have demonstrated that they are safe, effective and competent health care providers before, during and after the pandemic.

The aging of Maine's population creates significant demand for health care services and nurse practitioners are an essential component of our healthcare infrastructure. To

meet the demand, we need nurse practitioners educated in Maine and from out of state choosing to practice in Maine to provide care. Unfortunately, this regulation bottlenecks our Maine workforce development, hinders our ability to attract Nurse Practitioners to our state, and needlessly restricts the number of Nurse Practitioners who would otherwise evaluate, diagnose and treat patients

Nurse practitioners employed in a healthcare settings are already credentialed to provide care. Credentialing for nurse practitioners (NPs) is a formal process that verifies their qualifications, experience, and competence to practice. It involves gathering and verifying documents, including licenses, certifications, and malpractice insurance, to ensure they meet the standards required by the facility or organization.

We believe it is appropriate and safe to remove the unnecessary 24-month supervision regulatory burden for nurse practitioners in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of this bill.