



**Testimony of Courtney Vannah, IPDH, MS, MPH  
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*LD 1361: An Act to Require Insurance Coverage for Covered Dental Services Provided by  
Licensed Dental Hygienists and to Authorize Licensed Dental Hygienists to Bill Commercial  
Dental Insurance*

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
Public Hearing: April 24, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. My name is Courtney Vannah, and I live in Waldoboro. I am here today on behalf of the Independent Practice Dental Hygiene (IPDH) Networking Group and I urge you to support LD 1361.

This bill aligns Maine's insurance code with the Maine Dental Practice Act statutes pertaining to the practice of dental hygiene. The last time Maine's insurance code was amended regarding reimbursement of dental hygienists to add language about reimbursement of IPDHs, the Practice Act required supervision of Registered Dental Hygienists (RDHs) by a dentist. Therefore, Maine's insurance code did not include language requiring insurers to recognize the RDH as a reimbursable provider because services rendered by an RDH were billed under a dentist's license. However, since that time, the Practice Act has been revised to remove supervision requirements for RDH services -- a significant step towards access to preventive and early intervention care for Maine residents. However, one issue stands in the way of direct access to RDH services: the inability to be reimbursed by commercial insurers. A vote in favor of this bill would remove that barrier.

The IPDH Networking Group includes a number of practicing IPDHs in Maine who gather periodically to discuss issues affecting their practice. One such issue voiced by this group is that some payors reimburse them a lower rate than the exact same service provided by a dental hygienist that is billed under the license of a dentist. This inequity puts Maine's IPDHs at an unfair disadvantage when Maine relies on them for the increase in access to preventive and early intervention care they bring to thousands of patients, particularly children, who would otherwise not have access. A vote in favor of this bill would make it illegal for any dental hygienist to be reimbursed unfairly for equivalent services.

A vote in favor of this bill is a vote in favor of equity in care, fairness in reimbursement practices, and support for Maine's dental hygienist. We ask you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1361 to support access to oral healthcare.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions.