

Chairpersons and Members of the Committee:

My name is Aaron Guimond. I am a general dentist who practices in Belfast, Maine. I am currently employed by MaineHealth and help operate a small non-profit public health clinic at MaineHealth Waldo Hospital. I am also on the board of directors of the Maine Dental Association. I would love to present to you my thoughts of why I am opposed to LD1615.

Allowing foreign dentists with only a bachelor's degree in dentistry to practice in Maine raises significant concerns that outweigh the potential short-term benefits of increasing access to dental care. While the difficulty in securing timely dental appointments is a valid issue, lowering the qualification standards could compromise the quality of care patients receive. The current rigorous licensing process ensures that all dentists practicing in Maine have met a high standard of education and clinical competency, often including a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) degree, which involves more comprehensive training than a bachelor's degree.

Introducing dentists with potentially less extensive education could dilute the pool of highly skilled practitioners, making it more challenging for patients to discern the qualifications and expertise of their dentists. This uncertainty could erode public trust in the dental profession as a whole. Patients deserve assurance that their dental care providers have undergone thorough and standardized training, regardless of where they received their initial education. Maintaining the existing high standards for dental licensure is crucial for safeguarding patient well-being and preserving the integrity of dental practice in Maine.

Thank you for your time and helping to protect the oral health of Mainers!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Aaron Guimond".

Aaron Guimond DMD