

## **Testimony in Support of LD 1746: An Act to Reduce Dental Disease and Ensure Access to Essential Preventive Dental Care Among Maine Children**

**5/5/2025**

**Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Health and Human Services Committee:**

My name is Dr. Kailee Jorgenson, DMD, and I serve as the Clinical Director of Mainely Teeth and President of the Maine Oral Health Centers Alliance. I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1746, sponsored by Representative Lori Gramlich.

Dental disease remains the most common chronic condition among children, yet access to routine and preventive care is out of reach for far too many Maine families. Even among children with insurance, 65% do not receive regular dental care or have a dental home—this is a clear indicator that our current system is not meeting the needs of our youngest residents.

LD 1746 presents immediate, impactful solutions to this growing problem while easing the strain on Maine's already overextended dental workforce:

- Empowering primary care providers to apply Silver Diamine Fluoride and manage basic dental issues is a practical, evidence-based strategy. These providers often see children far more frequently than dentists, giving them a key opportunity to intervene early and prevent disease progression.
- Expanding mobile dental care through schools, modeled on successful local efforts, brings essential services directly to children in settings they already trust. With the right startup investment, this model can be scaled across the state and sustained through insurance reimbursement mechanisms.
- Preserving the Maine CDC's oral health infrastructure is essential. Without continued state-level coordination and support, these local programs cannot function effectively or reach the children who need care the most.

In addition to these solutions, I want to emphasize how challenging it is to manage the access-to-care crisis on the ground. The need is massive—not only for direct providers, but for those who can help coordinate care, assess needs, document what resources are lacking, and develop targeted, community-level interventions. We urgently need to increase the number of people involved in managing patients' dental needs, tracking outcomes, and planning long-term strategies to ensure every Maine child has access to preventive and therapeutic care. Without this kind of support, even well-designed care models will struggle to reach their full potential.

LD 1746 is a targeted, cost-effective step toward a stronger and more equitable oral health system. It leverages what we already know works, strengthens partnerships between health and education systems, and takes meaningful action to close persistent gaps in care.

I respectfully urge the Committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1746. This bill will make a real difference in the lives of Maine children and is a vital step toward a more sustainable, community-centered dental care system.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to improving oral health access for Maine's children.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Kailee Jorgenson, DMD  
Clinical Director, Mainely Teeth  
President, Maine Oral Health Centers Alliance

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Augusta  
LD 1746

Resubmitting testimony as my initial submission didn't send me a confirmation e-mail!