

Melissa Peltola
Warren
LD 2030

Dear Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee,

My name is Melissa Peltola, and I am a licensed Independent Practice Dental Hygienist practicing in Midcoast Maine. I am writing to respectfully urge you to vote Ought to Pass (OTP) on LD 2030: An Act to Expand the Scope of Practice of Independent Practice Dental Hygienists.

As an IPDH and owner of a small preventive hygiene practice serving rural and underserved patients, I routinely care for individuals who have difficulty accessing traditional dental offices due to transportation, mobility, childcare limitations, or dental anxiety. Many of my patients require localized pain management—yet under current rules, I cannot provide local anesthesia or nitrous oxide even when it is clearly indicated, within my training, and would prevent a patient from delaying or avoiding essential care. These restrictions limit the efficiency, comfort, and continuity of care for the very populations IPDHs were created to serve.

Allowing IPDHs to administer local anesthesia and nitrous oxide—just as hygienists can under dentist supervision—would meaningfully increase access to safe, preventive oral healthcare. This update would reduce unnecessary referrals, improve patient comfort, shorten wait times, and align Maine with other states that already permit expanded anesthesia privileges for independent hygienists. I frequently see patients who could have had their complete hygiene care done in one appointment if I were able to provide anesthesia; instead, they must delay treatment and travel elsewhere, or forgo care entirely.

LD 2030 strengthens access, supports preventive care delivery in rural communities, and allows IPDHs to practice to the full extent of their education and training. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support Maine's dental hygiene workforce and vote OTP on LD 2030.

Thank you for your service and consideration.

Sincerely,
Melissa Peltola
Warren, Maine
Independent Practice Dental Hygienist