

Testimony in Support:

LD 2088 "An Act to Increase Access to Primary Care Provided by Physician Associates."

Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Service Committee

January 19, 2026

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, my name is Howard Jones. I am a resident of Stockton Springs, Maine, and I practice Occupational Medicine. I am submitting testimony in support of LD 2088 "An Act to Increase Access to Primary Care Provided by Physician Associates."

As a physician who works closely with physician associates (PAs) and understands the value of care they provide, especially in the rural areas of our state, I support the elimination of the practice agreement requirement for PAs working in a non-physician owned practice. This bill keeps intact the requirement for physician collaboration with PAs practicing with less than 4,000 hours of clinical practice while also allowing PAs to practice to their fullest potential regardless of clinical setting. Additionally, particularly in our state, LD 2088's proposed changes promote greater parity with nurse practitioners who under Maine law in effect since 1995, can practice independent of a physician regardless of the practice setting, after a two-year supervision period. Both physicians and PAs remain deeply dedicated to revolutionizing healthcare in our nation through collaborative, patient-focused medical care. The collaborative nature of our healthcare system would not change with this new law. This bill allows for more opportunities for PAs to increase access to care for their patients while also providing them the option to practice similarly to other providers in the state.

We remain united with our healthcare colleagues in a shared mission to provide safe and effective care to all patients through a patient-centered and team-based approach while continuing to be thoughtful in how we approach solutions to access to care which is why I urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 2088.

Thank you,

Dr. Howard Jones, MD

128 Church St
Stockton Springs ME