

Testimony in Support:

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

Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Service Committee

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, I am submitting testimony in support of LD 2088 "An Act to Increase Access to Primary Care Provided by Physician Associates."

Physician Assistants/Associates (PAs) are highly trained and qualified practitioners. Over my career I have trained, supervised and educated many PAs, Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and other physicians. It is time to release PAs from being mandated to have a practice agreement requirement when working in a non-physician-owned practice. NPs have been practicing without this barrier to care in Maine for the past 30 years. PAs undergo rigorous education and training and are still required to maintain a physician collaboration agreement if practicing with less than 4,000 hours of clinical practice. At a time when we need to utilize our resources to their fullest potential, PAs are more than capable to help fill these gaps, increase access to patient care, and have earned their autonomy to practice clinically after substantial educational training and clinical oversight. 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. Jo Nell Orlando

28 years in medicine

Town of Residence Pittsfield