

Senate and House Health and Human Services Committee

Public Hearing on LD 2123

Submitted by: Jennifer Brunacini, DDS

Date: February 4, 2026

Good Morning Senator/Representative and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Jennifer Brunacini. I am a general dentist who focuses on treating patients who require advanced care delivery, including individuals with autism, developmental disabilities, congenital and genetic conditions, as well as mental and emotional disabilities.

I am here today to strongly support LD 2123, *An Act to Improve Dental Care Access for Children by Modifying the MaineCare Reimbursement Methodology for the Provision of Anesthesia for Certain Dental Services*, because it directly impacts the patient population I serve.

After practicing as a general dentist in Maine for 16 years, I recognized a significant unmet need among patients who age out of pediatric dental care but continue to require specialized treatment tailored to their abilities and medical conditions. When Dr. Dowling approached me with the opportunity to help care for this specific population, we began working collaboratively to create a continuum of care for his existing patients while also expanding access for older children and individuals with special needs.

Children and adolescents are referred to us from across the state. We frequently hear parents say, "This is the only office that would accept my child at this age," or "This is the only office that can treat my child given their medical history." These statements reflect a serious access issue in our state.

My colleagues and I have pursued extensive training to provide care through multiple modalities, including behavioral techniques and in-office sedation. However, for children whose needs exceed those interventions, general anesthesia is often the only safe and appropriate option. For these patients, access to the Maine Dental Surgery Center is essential.

LD 2123 is critical to ensuring that providers can continue offering necessary anesthesia services and that vulnerable children are not denied care due to reimbursement barriers. Without adequate support for anesthesia services, access will continue to shrink, leaving families with nowhere to turn.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,
Dr. Jennifer Brunacini