

Ryan Gallant
Augusta
LD 2105

Testimony in Support of LD 2105

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Ryan Gallant, and I am writing today on behalf of the Maine Occupational Therapy Association (MEOTA) in support of LD 2105.

The Maine Occupational Therapy Association represents occupational therapy practitioners across Maine, including occupational therapists (OTs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) working in hospitals, outpatient clinics, schools, early intervention programs, home health, skilled nursing facilities, and community-based services.

MEOTA supports LD 2105 because occupational therapy practitioners are often in a unique position to identify and respond to concerns related to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and unsafe living conditions.

Occupational therapists frequently work with:

- * infants and children with developmental needs
- * older adults with cognitive decline or functional impairment
- * individuals with disabilities receiving long-term services and supports
- * people with injuries or conditions that place them at higher risk for mistreatment

In many of these settings, OTs develop long-term therapeutic relationships with clients and families. We often observe changes over time, assess home and environmental safety, and evaluate functional abilities that may reveal warning signs that are not easily identified in a brief medical visit.

Importantly, many occupational therapy practitioners already operate as though they are mandated reporters — because it is ethically expected, clinically appropriate, and consistent with our professional responsibilities.

Adding occupational therapy practitioners as mandated reporters improves safety and strengthens Maine's protective system by:

- * increasing early identification of risk
- * improving coordination across disciplines
- * supporting timely reporting and intervention
- * reinforcing professional accountability and clarity

This bill also helps ensure consistency across healthcare disciplines. Occupational therapy is licensed, regulated, and held to professional standards. Our practitioners are trained to identify risk factors, document objectively, and communicate concerns appropriately.

MEOTA respectfully urges the Committee to support LD 2105.

This bill is a practical, common-sense step that strengthens Maine's safety net for children, vulnerable adults, and individuals with disabilities. Occupational therapy practitioners are already on the front lines — this legislation ensures Maine law reflects that reality.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the people of Maine. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
Ryan Gallant
On behalf of the Maine Occupational Therapy Association (MEOTA)