

Testimony of Deborah L. Drew, Ed.D., LCPC

February 15, 2026

In Support of LD 2082: An Act to Regulate the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Providing Certain Mental Health Services

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services:

My name is Dr. Deborah Drew and I am a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor practicing in the State of Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to provide my strong support for LD 2082.

This bill appropriately limits the role of AI in providing direct mental health counseling services to clients, stating that these critical services must be provided by licensed, professionally trained mental health personnel. It recognizes the importance of professionally trained, licensed, and regulated human to human interaction in the provision of mental health counseling. People seek counseling services at times when they are most vulnerable. The ability to establish a human connection, a strong professional relationship, make critical assessment of the client's needs, goals, diagnosis, and provide appropriate treatment and guide the path to wellness is nuanced, individual, and delicate work best conducted by specially qualified, licensed human beings.

This bill also recognizes and appropriately limits the important role that AI can play in assisting licensed mental health counselors in their work. It specifies that the appropriate role for AI is "specifically to assist in providing administrative support or supplementary support in therapy or psychotherapy services only if the licensed professional maintains full responsibility for all interactions, outputs and data use associated with the use of artificial intelligence and satisfies the requirements of subsection 3" – an appropriate and useful tool for the therapist or counselor when used responsibly by that trained and licensed professional following guidelines.

I urge you to support the passage of LD 2082, An Act to Regulate the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Providing Certain Mental Health Services. This bill both protects clients and provides support for licensed mental health practitioners. It helps to ensure that as technology evolves, mental health care in Maine remains human-centered, ethical, and accountable.