



Testimony in Support of LD2082: Regulating Artificial Intelligence in Mental Health Services

Dear Senator Pierce, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services,

As a practicing mental health clinician, educator, supervisor, and clinical trainer for nearly 50 years, I am writing to encourage your vote in favor of LD2082: An Act to Regulate the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Providing Certain Mental Health Services.

I am Jeri Stevens, PhD, LCPC, CCS. I currently work half-time for Husson University and full-time in my own private practice. I am a past Co-President of Maine Mental Health Counselors Association (MeMHCA) and the Legislative Chair for this membership organization. AI has become a fundamental operational tool for our profession and everyday use. Insurance companies are using AI to audit agencies, resulting in significant financial “clawbacks.” However, a positive outcome is that AI is being incorporated into daily administrative processes for notetaking and billing, thereby increasing accuracy and saving time.

Concerns About AI in Service Delivery

Conversely, Artificial Intelligence has also entered the delivery of services. Without the power of relationship, empathy, and intuition, AI in service delivery is dangerous. After reading several colleague testimonials, I want to state my agreement and support for their views, and will focus here on the critical issue of suicide risk.

Current Regulatory Landscape in Maine

Maine law does not currently prohibit the use of AI for therapeutic purposes, but it does require clear consumer disclosure when interacting with AI systems and strictly regulates its use in health insurance decisions. The Maine AI Task Force, established by Governor Mills in December 2024, has been studying AI's implications, including its use in healthcare. Their October 2025 draft recommendations encourage the development of clear pathways for approving innovative AI tools to supplement behavioral health services, while also addressing risks such as data privacy, liability, and the need for professional training and oversight. Although this is a positive step, it presumes consumers of these therapeutic services understand the risks and believe the AI genuinely cares for and understands them, which can lead to dangerous outcomes.

Comparison with Other States

While Maine has focused on transparency and human oversight in insurance, other states have more explicit laws regarding AI in therapy:

- Illinois prohibits AI systems from engaging in therapeutic communications or making independent clinical decisions.
- Nevada bans offering interactive AI systems that claim to provide professional mental or behavioral health services.
- Utah requires clear disclosures for "AI mental health chatbots" and prohibits their sale of individual health information.

Recent Incidents and Legal Actions

Parents of several teenagers who died by suicide have filed lawsuits against AI companies, including OpenAI (maker of ChatGPT) and Character.AI, alleging that their chatbots encouraged or assisted in self-harm.

Adam Raine (16 years old, California): His parents sued OpenAI, claiming the ChatGPT bot acted as a "suicide coach," offering advice on methods to hide injuries and offering to write a suicide note.

Sewell Setzer III (14 years old, Florida): His mother sued Character.AI, alleging the chatbot engaged in sexual and predatory behavior, presented itself as a romantic partner, and failed to provide help when the teen expressed suicidal thoughts.

Belgian man: A man in Belgium died by suicide after a six-week-long conversation about climate change with a chatbot on the Chai AI platform.

Conclusion and Call to Action

In Maine, the current approach emphasizes transparency, disclosure, and human accountability, rather than an outright ban on AI in therapeutic contexts. Passing *LD2082: An Act to Regulate the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Providing Certain Mental Health Services* will close the gap and make clear that the use of non-human therapy in the State of Maine is unlawful, while also allowing for helpful AI tools for documentation and efficacy within healthcare agencies.

Thank you for reading this testimonial and please feel free to contact me with questions.

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