In Support Of LD 2082

Members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services:

My name is Hannah Hildreth, I am a graduate student studying Clinical Mental Health Counseling at the University of Southern Maine and I strongly support LD 2082.

As a neophyte counselor seeing clients under strict professional supervision, I am learning the skills, judgment, and ethical responsibilities required to provide effective counseling. I see firsthand that mental health care depends on human connection and real time informed decision-making bolstered by accountability that only a human can assume. AI can be a helpful tool for tasks like note-taking, scheduling, or organizing information, but it cannot replace the professional and ethical responsibility that comes with licensure.

This bill strikes a careful balance: it allows for exciting innovation while protecting client-consumers. AI can be used to support administrative and supplementary tasks, like note-taking or organizing records, helping clinicians work more efficiently without compromising care. At the same time, clinical judgment remains fully with licensed professionals. AI is prohibited from making therapeutic decisions, communicating directly with clients, or generating treatment plans without clinician review, which is extremely important to protect clients from the pitfalls and "hallucinations" to which AI is prone.

Importantly, the bill prevents unlicensed AI-based "therapy," from misrepresenting itself as therapy or by operating without clinical oversight. Mental health care in Maine must remain under the oversight of licensed clinicians to protect the safety of Mainers and the integrity of the field.

Supporting this legislation means supporting ethical, human-centered care. When used thoughtfully, AI can bolster our work as clinicians. LD 2082 ensures that AI strengthens clinical practice without replacing professional responsibility, keeping the therapeutic relationship at the heart of mental health care here in Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hannah Hildreth
MS Student in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Resident of Camden, Maine