



**LD 997 Resolve, to Reduce Workforce Barriers for Mental Health Professionals in  
Maine**

**Testimony in Support  
April 10, 2023**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN. I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations speaking in support of this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with more than 10,000 employees statewide.

Section 3 of this bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to amend its guidelines on community-based mental health rehabilitation technician certification. This will have significant positive impact on the Northern Light Acadia Hospital workforce.

The changes proposed in this section of the bill waives the mental health rehabilitation technician/community certification, also known as an MHRT/C certification for those with a bachelor's degree and expedite our ability to credential these employees to work. These employees are the individuals that work with adult behavioral health patients at Acadia Hospital.

The MHRT/C certification classes include several 30 hours classes which are expensive for students and behavioral health employers. Today, even if an individual has a masters or doctoral degree in a clinical field they need to complete the MHRT/c classes for the credential which is required in the state to work with behavioral health adults. This bill allows a highly educated professional to work as a mental health rehabilitation technician by meeting the course work standards already covered in their academic coursework for 3 priority domains identified in the certification program.

We ask that you support this important legislation. Thank you.

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Maine Coast Hospital  
Mayo Hospital  
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Northern Light Health Foundation  
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