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LD790 Testimony

My name is Dr. Daniel Nadeau. I was born and raised in Lewiston-Auburn, having attended all of my schooling in the State of Maine up until my graduate and doctoral studies. I returned to the state as a doctor to serve the community that raised me and am currently practicing in Auburn where I was raised. When I was younger, I had to receive physicals for school to play in the many sports I excelled in, specifically for high school and undergraduate sports. Throughout that time, I only received physicals from a chiropractor and never once had the physicals provided come into question as being valid or of qualification. That being said, a concern has been voiced in regards to chiropractors giving school physicals in Maine by some educational institutes. The bill seeks to reconnect individuals with qualified healthcare professionals within their scope of practice such as school-related services, including concussion assessment, and physical exams.

Chiropractors perform physical exams everyday, with a comprehensive skill set honed through rigorous education and national recognition. The average education for a doctor of chiropractic degree has a heavy focus on just diagnosis and assessment. This includes extensive training in anatomy, physiology, and musculoskeletal assessment along with diagnostic studies related but not limited to kidney, stomach issues and auscultation of the heart and lungs, all of which are included in the standard MPA physical assessment form. We have also been providers of Maine state DOT physicals for over 20 years and continue to do so currently which is part of our formal education and training. As licensed healthcare professionals, chiropractors are regulated by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners and the Department of Education. This guarantees we meet the highest standards of care across the country. Moreover, chiropractors use the same CPT codes as the American Medical Association (AMA), ensuring that our services are in line with national healthcare protocols and billing standards and are federally recognized as primary care physicians in 33 states. This consistency in coding and billing further affirms the qualifications to perform physical exams in the same manner as other licensed medical professionals. Chiropractors are also well-versed in using the SCAT-6 concussion protocol and its associated outcome measures, which are key tools in assessing athletes for physical impairments, particularly in the context of sports or injury assessments.

Beyond just providing services to the general population, chiropractors play an essential role in under-served areas, something the State of Maine has dealt with for many years, where access to medical providers for services such as school physicals may be more limited. The bill at hand does state it is limited to those students already under the chiropractor's care but by offering physicals and other services in these communities, chiropractors help bridge the healthcare gap, making quality care and physicals more accessible to everyone, regardless of location in the state.

In closing, any medical provider should only provide services for which they have been trained for. For chiropractors, this very much includes school physicals and concussion assessments and if a medical professional is acting within their scope of practice then other healthcare providers should not be allowed to block their ability to perform these services. With regard to what has been presented, I ask you to support LD 790.

- Dr. Daniel Nadeau, D.C.