

Testimony from Max Russell Before the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

LD 581 An Act to Fund the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program

Public Hearing: March 31, 2025

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Max Russell, I am a third-year medical student currently at Maine General Hospital here in Augusta, and I am here today to express my strong support for continued funding for the Doctors for Maine's Future Scholarship Program. This program is not just an investment in education — it's an investment in Maine's health, its communities, and its future.

As you know, Maine faces a serious shortage of doctors, particularly in rural areas. Without enough doctors, people wait longer for care, travel farther for basic medical needs, and sometimes go without necessary treatment. The Doctors for Maine's Future program is a direct and effective solution to this problem. By providing financial assistance to students who are committed to practicing in Maine, this program helps ensure that we have well-trained, passionate doctors ready to serve the people who need them most.

For students like me, this scholarship is life-changing. The cost of medical school is daunting, and for many, it can be a barrier too high to overcome. By easing that financial burden, this program allows students to pursue medical education right here in Maine. And when we train here, we are far more likely to stay — by choosing to complete our residencies in Maine, establish roots in Maine, and ultimately practice in Maine communities. This is how we build a healthcare system that truly serves our state: by making it possible for Maine students to become Maine doctors.

I urge you to continue funding this essential program. By doing so, you are not only supporting students like me but also securing the future of healthcare in our state. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Maine's health and well-being.

Thank you,

J. Maxwell Russell, OMS-III