

Myra Broadway, JD, MS, RN

In Favor of LD 961 - An Act to Address Maine's Health Care Workforce Shortage and Improve Access to Care

Good afternoon, Senator Bailey, Representative Gramlich and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, my name is Myra Broadway, Gardiner, and I speak in favor of LD 961.

I formerly worked for the Maine State Board of Nursing for 23.5 years: from January 1992 - July 2015: the first six years as its Assistant Executive Director and the last 17.5 as its Executive Director. I was a state nursing regulator present at the beginning of the initiative to when the state established independent practice for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). I was part of the regulatory implementation process and, as a regulator, observed its impact on Maine and patients. I remember the scenario discussions before the committee of jurisdiction well. Ultimately, to make the bill passable there were two compromises included. One was the joint advisory council comprised of representatives from Nursing, Medicine, Pharmacy, and a public member appointed by then Governor King. The one viable outcome of this advisory body was the determination that the formulary be unrestricted; and this was at the strong insistence of the pharmacist. After very few years, the council ceased to meet as there were no issues to address and so it was dissolved through a statutory amendment.

The second item of compromise was the 24-month period of supervision for Nurse Practitioners (NPs). I submit to you that this provision should have met the same demise as the council and at the same time. Frankly, after being retired nearly ten years, I was surprised to learn that the requirement is still in place. At the time there were no data, no evidence, no studies, no anything to support this but the concession was made to help move Maine forward. There continues to be no evidence to support this requirement.

It is time to remove the requirement thereby freeing both the nurse practitioner and the supervising physician or NP. Twice as much manpower is thus gained. This ultimately provides more time for the patient as health care providers would not be encumbered with an administrative burden. Employment settings are competent to monitor their employees in respective practices.

I urge you to vote OUGHT TO PASS and would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Myra Broadway