



Testimony in support:

**LD 961, "An Act to Address Maine's Health Care Workforce Shortage and
Improve Access to Care"**

Joint Standing Committee On Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

April 15, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Evelyn Kieltyka and I live in East Winthrop. I am a family nurse practitioner and the Senior Vice President of Program Services at Maine Family Planning (MFP) and a Maine Nurse Practitioner Association Board Member. I am here to speak in support of LD 961, "An Act to Address Maine's Health Care Workforce Shortage and Improve Access to Care" sponsored by Representative MATHIESON, and to ask for your support of the proposal.

This 24-month supervision regulation bottlenecks Maine's workforce development hinders our ability to attract Nurse Practitioners to our state, and needlessly restricts the number of Nurse Practitioners who would otherwise evaluate, diagnose and treat patients, often in the most needed parts of our State.

I met several nurse practitioners at post-pandemic meetings saying they would love to come back to Maine to work but the 24-month supervision was a barrier. Both were experienced nurse practitioners, but finding a colleague in their state to say "I supervised NP X for 24-months" is simply not true and keeps them and other NPs from returning to Maine to work. Even Maine's Emergency COVID legislation recognized this barrier to access of care when it lifted all supervisory restrictions in March 2020 due to the pandemic.

The 24-month supervision amendment to our bill in 1995, thirty years ago, was a political compromise, not a policy of best practice. I know, I was there when we received our first "ought to pass" out of the senate. The pressure from our opposition was intense. The stakes were very high. In fact, the then President of the American Medical Association at the time was a Maine physician. Imagine the AMA's embarrassment, who have always opposed any advancement of NPs, if this law were to pass. We would become only the 5th state to obtain full practice authority (Now, 24 states have full practice authority). The pressure from the opposition got to some senators, who came to us and said we need two years (first it was four) of supervision to pass this bill, for the second senate vote. Even today you will hear from MMA, who will oppose this bill using the differences in our paths to being licensed and certified to practice. They will not cite safety or competence because 50 years of research has demonstrated otherwise.

Thank you for your time and attention; please support LD 961.

Sincerely, Evelyn Kieltyka, MSN, MS, FNP-BC