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**Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine**  
*The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers*

**Testimony in Support of**

**An Act to Reduce the Counselor and Social Worker Shortage by Amending  
Reciprocity Requirements for Those Professionals from Other Jurisdictions  
– LD 1590**

**April 30, 2025**

Good morning, Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and honorable members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. My name is Adam Bloom-Paicopolos. I am a resident of Wells and am proud to serve as the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine (the Alliance). The Alliance is the statewide association representing Maine's community-based behavioral health agencies who provide mental health and substance use services to over 80,000 children, adults, and families annually. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

**On behalf of the Alliance, I am here today to speak in support of LD 1590, "An Act to Reduce the Counselor and Social Worker Shortage by Amending Reciprocity Requirements for Those Professionals from Other Jurisdictions."**

This bill offers a practical and immediate solution by removing unnecessary barriers for qualified professionals seeking to practice in Maine. By allowing licensure for applicants who have held licenses in good standing for at least two years in jurisdictions with similar scope of practice requirements, we can rapidly expand our mental health workforce. Qualified professionals can begin serving Maine residents more quickly without unnecessary delays or duplicative requirements. The bill maintains important safeguards by requiring applicants to have clean professional records with no pending complaints, allegations, investigations, or ethics violations.

By simplifying the process for established practitioners, we make Maine a more attractive destination for experienced counselors and social workers. Increased workforce mobility will help address shortages in underserved areas, particularly in rural Maine. For military spouses and others who relocate to Maine, this legislation removes barriers to continuing their careers.

This legislation aligns Maine with national efforts to improve license portability for mental health professionals. Organizations such as the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) and the American Counseling Association (ACA) have been working to reduce unnecessary barriers to interstate practice while maintaining professional standards.

Maine families are often waiting 4-6 months for initial appointments for children experiencing mental health crises. Older adults are unable to access services when

therapists retire or move due to lack of replacement providers. Despite these access to care challenges, right now we have qualified professionals with years of exemplary licensed service in other states who moved to Maine that are unable to practice for 6-12 months while navigating a confusing and unnecessarily complex re-licensure process.

This legislation represents a balanced approach that maintains professional standards while removing unnecessary barriers. By enabling qualified mental health professionals to more easily relocate to Maine, we can begin addressing our critical workforce shortage immediately. The mental health of Maine residents cannot wait.

**I respectfully urge you to support LD 1590 that will help ensure timely access to essential mental health services for all Maine residents.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony this afternoon. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Bloom-Paicopolos', written in a cursive style.

Adam Bloom-Paicopolos, MPP  
Executive Director