



Testimony Neither for Nor Against:

LD 1803, "An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Optometric Practice.

Joint Standing Committee On Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

May 13, 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 representing the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association. I am here to speak neither for nor against LD1803, sponsored by Senator Brenner.

The Maine Nurse Practitioner Association urges you to be cautious and discerning when receiving testimony from other health care professions, purporting to know how and if Optometrists should practice their profession. It has become common for health care associations to weigh in on the scope of practice for other health care associations – and we fundamentally disagree with that practice. We believe in the competence of our licensing boards and have faith they will protect the public through with rigorous examination and licensing requirements. It is licensing boards who should decide who is competent to practice and in what ways – not competing health care professions.

For example, I'd like to read the first thing you see when you go the Maine State Board of Optometry's website.

The Maine State Board of Optometry was established to protect the public through the regulation of the practice of optometry in the State of Maine so as to maintain high professional standards. The primary responsibilities of the Board are to examine and license qualified applicants to practice the profession of optometry and to hold the title of Optometrist in the State of Maine, upon payment of specified fees; to renew all licenses annually upon payment of a specified fee and presentation of evidence that the applicant has attended an educational program approved by the Board; and to revoke, refuse or suspend any license for violation of the laws relating to optometry.

It is Maine Nurse Practitioner Association's belief that licensing boards have the sole responsibility to provide oversight of its licensees. Health care, not unlike other professions, is rife with turf wars and competition. We urge you to recognize those personal interests when assessing these scope of practice bills and to put your trust in the licensing boards ultimately responsible for ensuring clinical competence and patients' safety. The Maine Nurse Practitioner Association takes no position on LD 1803 as we do not practice Optometry and are not qualified to assess competencies and issues of scope. As stated above, we are confident that the Board of Optometry will license Optometrist according to their competences.

Thank you for your time today.

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