



**Maine**  
DENTAL HYGIENISTS'  
ASSOCIATION

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee:

My name is Traci Dempsey. I live in Bath and operate an independent dental hygiene practice in Augusta. I am testifying on behalf of the Maine Dental Hygienists' Association in support of LD 2030.

Independent dental hygiene practices routinely serve adults covered by MaineCare as well as uninsured and underinsured patients, many of whom have not seen a dental provider in more than ten years. These patients frequently present with periodontal disease that requires scaling and root planing (commonly called "deep cleaning") to restore oral health. In a typical dental setting, hygienists administer local anesthetic to allow thorough subgingival instrumentation; without effective anesthesia, these procedures can be painful. Unfortunately, many traditional dental offices do not accept MaineCare or uninsured patients, leaving this vulnerable population to receive only topical anesthetic that is often inadequate.

LD 2030 would allow independent dental hygienists to practice at the top of their license and provide necessary anesthesia to ensure patient comfort during invasive periodontal procedures. For nearly three decades, Maine dental hygienists with advanced, board-approved training have safely administered local anesthetic and nitrous oxide under dentist supervision. Practices are required to maintain written emergency protocols, report adverse events to the Board, and ensure all providers maintain current Basic Life Support certifications. Board Complaints related to hygienists' administration of these services have been exceedingly rare.

Allowing independent dental hygienists to provide these services will expand access to care—particularly for underserved populations, rural communities, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and patients whose anxiety or pain would otherwise prevent them from receiving needed oral health care.

I respectfully request the committee vote Ought to Pass on LD 2030. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you for your time,

Traci L. Dempsey, RDH, IPDH  
Immediate Past President  
Maine Dental Hygienists' Association  
Bath, Maine