



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL
& FINANCIAL REGULATION
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL REGULATION



Janet T. Mills
Governor

Penny Vaillancourt
Director

Joan F. Cohen
Commissioner

**TESTIMONY OF
PENNY VAILLANCOURT, DIRECTOR**

**OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL REGULATION
DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATION**

NEITHER FOR NOR AGAINST LD 2030

**“AN ACT TO EXPAND THE SCOPE OF PRACTICE OF INDEPENDENT PRACTICE
DENTAL HYGIENISTS”**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Public Hearing: January 20, 2026, 1:00 PM

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Committee, I am Penny Vaillancourt, Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation (“OPOR”). OPOR has 38 licensing boards and programs including the Board of Dental Practice (“Board”). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of OPOR regarding LD 2030.

The Board’s sole statutory purpose is to protect the public, and it does so by identifying minimum standards for licensure, investigating allegations of unprofessional or incompetent practice and imposing discipline when deemed appropriate. The Board issues licensure to qualified applicants seeking to practice as a dental professional such as dentists, dental hygienists, denturists, dental radiographers and expanded function dental assistants. Currently, there are 1,466 licensed dental hygienists, 286 of which hold an authority to practice as an independent practice dental hygienist (“IPDH”). Of the actively licensed IPDHs, 201 hold a local anesthesia authority and 78 hold both a local anesthesia authority and a nitrous oxide analgesia authority.

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LD 2030 expands the scope of practice of IPDH by making clear the ability to administer local anesthesia and use nitrous oxide analgesia without the supervision of a dentist so long as the IPDH applies for and is granted the required practice authority from the Board.

Consistent with its testimony before the Committee on bills related to expanded scopes of practice, OPOR is not taking a position but recognizes the collective efforts of the Board, the regulated community, and the professional associations in their work to continue modernize the Dental Practice Act to remove barriers so that qualified dental professional can practice at the level they are trained and competent.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions now or at the work session.

