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Testimony of the Division of Licensing and Certification
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

In Support of LD 2189, *An Act to Require Prior Notification of Closures of Labor and Delivery Units and Changes in Maternity or Newborn Care Services by Hospitals as Recommended by the Commission to Evaluate the Scope of Regulatory Review and Oversight over Health Care Transactions That Impact the Delivery of Health Care Services in the State*

Sponsor: Representative Mathieson
Hearing Date: February 18, 2026

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. My name is Bill Montejo and I serve as the Director of the Division of Licensing and Certification in the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. I am here today to testify in support of LD 2189, *An Act to Require Prior Notification of Closures of Labor and Delivery Units and Changes in Maternity or Newborn Care Services by Hospitals as Recommended by the Commission to Evaluate the Scope of Regulatory Review and Oversight over Health Care Transactions That Impact the Delivery of Health Care Services in the State*. I was also a member of the Commission that is putting forward this recommendation and understand the benefit that this legislation would provide.

We have all heard and seen how the closure of labor and delivery units have significant impact on communities, and particularly on families who are pregnant or newly postpartum. There are appropriate reasons why sustaining L&D in certain areas may not be safe or possible, but there needs to be a diligent process to ensure a warm hand off for those who are impacted. The Department has long advocated for additional process around the closure of these units, and passage of this bill will codify existing Department guidance for prior notice from hospitals into a statutory requirement and will add clarity to ensure timely notice for the department, patients, and community occurs. The Department contemplated and put forward a very similar bill a few years ago which unfortunately did not pass.

The Department would suggest that the language as proposed be placed instead under 22 MRSA §1822, Notice of voluntary closure of hospital, sanatorium, convalescent home, rest home, nursing home, or similar institution. In our view, this is the appropriate place to incorporate this into existing regulation.

I would be happy to answer any questions for the Committee and make myself available for the work session. Thank you.