

**Cayford, Edna**

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**From:** Jennifer Waters <jenniferwaters48@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 9:11 PM  
**To:** Cmte HCIFS  
**Cc:** tdempseyipdh@gmail.com; natalieasaltz@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Please Vote Ought Not To Pass (ONTP) LD 2206: An Act Expanding Access to Oral Health Care by Creating a New Path for Obtaining a License to Practice Dentistry

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**This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.**

Dear Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee,

I am writing as a licensed Maine dental hygienist to respectfully urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass (ONTP) on LD 2206, An Act Expanding Access to Oral Health Care by Creating a New Path for Obtaining a License to Practice Dentistry.

Maine has worked thoughtfully to establish clear and trusted standards of dental education, licensure, and scope of practice. Patients reasonably assume a consistent level of training and clinical preparation when they seek care from a licensed dentist. Allowing internationally trained dentists to practice with a similar or identical scope to U.S.-trained dentists—without requiring equivalent educational and clinical pathways—risks creating confusion for patients about the qualifications of the professional treating them.

Even with the designation of an “associate license,” most patients will not fully understand the distinctions in training or clinical experience. This may unintentionally mislead the public into believing all dentists practicing under Maine licensure have completed comparable education and supervised clinical training. Clear and consistent standards help maintain patient trust and protect public safety.

Additionally, creating a pathway that allows individuals to bypass the established U.S. dental education and licensure process may unintentionally undermine the significant investment current Maine dentists have made in their education and training. It could also incentivize prospective students to seek shorter or less rigorous training programs elsewhere with the expectation of returning to Maine to practice under a modified license. Over time, this may erode confidence in the profession and create uneven expectations for competency and preparedness.

Maine has been a leader in expanding access to care through carefully considered, transparent, and well-regulated scope expansions, including independent dental hygiene licensure and the dental hygiene therapist model. These initiatives have balanced innovation with patient protection and professional accountability. LD 2206, however, risks lowering or obscuring established standards rather than building on them in a measured way.

Access to care is an important and legitimate concern. However, solutions should strengthen the workforce while preserving clear and consistent training standards that maintain public trust.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 2206.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to maintaining high standards of oral health care for the people of Maine.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Waters

Licensed Maine Dental Hygienist