

Cayford, Edna

From: Stacy West <stacybouthotwest@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2026 10:13 AM
To: Cmte HCIFS
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

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

My name is Stacy West and I am writing as a licensed Maine Dental Hygienist to urge you to vote Ought NOT to Pass (ONTP) on LD2206: An act expanding access to oral health care by creating a new path for obtaining a license to practice dentistry.

I am writing to respectfully share my concerns regarding proposals that would allow internationally trained dentists to practice under an "associate license" without completing the full, standardized licensure pathway currently required in our state.

My position is grounded in the importance of maintaining consistent educational, clinical, and regulatory standards for all practitioners who provide dental care to the public. Dentistry involves irreversible procedures, complex medical assessments, pharmacologic management, and the potential for serious medical emergencies. Patients deserve the assurance that every licensed provider has demonstrated competency through the same accredited educational benchmarks, clinical examinations, and regulatory oversight processes.

My concern is not about where a dentist receives their education. Internationally trained dentists often possess valuable experience and diverse clinical skills. Rather, my concern centers on preserving uniform licensure standards that protect patient safety, ensure accountability, and maintain public trust in the profession. Creating an alternate licensure category may introduce variability in training verification, scope of practice expectations, and emergency preparedness requirements.

I strongly support pathways that allow internationally trained dentists to practice in our state; however, I believe those pathways should include standardized assessments that confirm educational equivalency and clinical competency under the same expectations required of all licensed dentists.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to protecting the health and safety of the public. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Stacy L. West, IPDH, M.S.Ed.
Arundel
Dental Hygienist