

**TESTIMONY OF DENNIS E. SMITH, ESQ.
PUBLIC MEMBER, BOARD OF OSTEOPATHIC LICENSURE
DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATION IN SUPPORT OF
L.D. 2233**

**An Act to Combine the Board of Licensure in Medicine and Board
of Osteopathic Licensure into a Single Licensing Board for All
Physicians and Physician Associates
Before the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services**

March 18, 2026

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dennis E. Smith of Augusta, Maine and I am a public Member of the Board of Osteopathic Licensure (BOL). I am testifying in support of LD 2233.

Prior to serving on the BOL as a public member, I had both legal and administrative experience with occupational and professional licensing boards – to include medical licensure and regulation. I served as an Assistant Attorney General (AAG) assigned to the Board of Licensure in Medicine for almost a decade, assisting with investigations, licensing, rulemaking, and statutory revisions. As an AAG, I provided legal support and legal advice to the board concerning all issues affecting its licensing and regulation of allopathic physicians and physician assistants. Following my tenure as an AAG, I served as the Executive Director to the Board of Licensure in Medicine – with overall responsibility for the implementation of the board’s various functions in protecting the public. In that capacity, I learned about the staffing levels required to support the board and its mission and the various aspects of its functions: licensing; complaints and investigations; rulemaking; budget; etc. In other words, I know what resources that the Board of Licensure in Medicine has and how much those resources could help with a combined board. Now, as a public member of the BOL, which has a staff of one person I can tell you that the merger of the boards will bring much needed support to the BOL. BOL has a staff of one – who is very dedicated but also very overwhelmed with all of the duties - who performs all of the tasks of BOLIM’s staff of ten people. Imagine that. I cannot overemphasize how badly needed those additional resources are for the protection of the public.

For the past year and half, I have worked with my colleagues on the BOL and BOLIM to study the feasibility of the boards merging. We have performed a great deal of work – to include putting together a draft statute to make the structure of a merged board apparent and transparent. LD 2233 is the product of that work. While it marks the end of the separate boards – it ushers in a new combined board with equal numbers of osteopathic and allopathic physicians together with their combined knowledge, experience, and differences.

I want to close by sharing with you that I have a son who is an allopathic physician and a daughter who is an osteopathic physician. As you might imagine, whether one is an allopathic physician or an osteopathic physician does not matter to me – both are physicians who are working to help people. One is not better than the other nor less than the other. In my eyes, they are equal – and always will be.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments regarding LD 2233. I would be happy to answer questions now or at the work session.


