

Joann Moulton
Harpwell
LD 1026

Dear Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and distinguished members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee.

I am Joann Moulton from the town of Harpswell and I am testifying in support of LD 1026. I have been a registered dental hygienist for 40 years in this state and sadly I have seen the gap widening between the oral health needs of our citizens and access to care. My belief that the best way to meet the oral health needs of the state is to have more midlevel providers of care. The best way to have more providers is to have a school in our state. Good oral health is essential for overall health and not just a luxury. There is a bidirectional correlation between oral health diseases and many diseases of inflammation such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases to name two. Tooth decay is the number one preventable disease of children in the country and when untreated it progresses to debilitating disease and can be fatal.

If we did not have midlevel providers of medical care in this state such as nurse practitioners or physician's assistants, many of us would not have a medical home. The problem is the same for those in need of a dental home. There is an extreme need for access to oral health care that cannot be ignored any longer and this bill will help to increase the number of midlevel dental therapists in the state of Maine.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.