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*26 Years of **Full Practice Authority** as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine*

February 18, 2021

RE: IN SUPPORT OF LD 295: An Act to Repeal Restrictions that Prohibit Certain Advanced Practice Registered Nurses from Providing Essential Health Care Services.

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and distinguished members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee,

My name is Kathleen Forti-Gallant from Stetson, Maine and I am a Nurse Practitioner who works in both Orthopedic Surgery and Medical Services at two hospitals and was previously in private practice. I am writing on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association (MNPA), as a Nurse Practitioner, and citizen of Maine and urge you to support LD 295 “An Act to Repeal Restrictions That Prohibit Certain Advanced Practice Registered Nurses from Providing Essential Health Care Services.”

As you know, this bill would eliminate the provision in the law from 1995 that requires 24 months of supervision of a Nurse Practitioner by a physician, supervising nurse practitioner, or be employed by a hospital or clinic that has a physician medical director. This supervisory restriction was lifted in March 2020 by the Governor’s Emergency COVID Executive Order. LD 295 would allow us to provide care that we are already competent to do, without unnecessary restrictions.

Nurse practitioners (NP) can evaluate & diagnose patients, work with a healthcare team, provide counseling & education, perform & interpret diagnostic tests, perform some procedures, initiate & manage treatments including medications & non-pharmacologic treatments. There is no evidence that additional time spent after licensure with the 24 month supervisory restrictions improves patient safety or Nurse Practitioner readiness.

The majority of states with full practice authority have no transitional supervision requirement. Historically the supervision period is a political compromise, not supported by clinical outcome data as there are studies that support the fact that Nurse Practitioners provide safe, high quality, evidence-based care, with excellent patient satisfaction & comparable outcomes (AANP, 2020). The Institute of Medicine report recommended that advanced practice nurses practice to the full extent of their training & education in our complex fragmented healthcare system including leadership in healthcare teams, by removing barriers (Kowalski, 2012), such as this restriction in our current law.

Removing this restriction on Nurse Practitioner practice will improve access to care for Maine people, encourage Nurse Practitioners to stay in Maine to practice after they graduate, as well as promote providing care in underserved and rural areas instead of having to stay in the more urban areas where more physicians are, just so that they can have the 24 month supervisory agreements.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD 295 and appreciate the opportunity to share my testimony with you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or for further information.

Respectfully Submitted,
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References

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