

Testimony in Support LD 1 An Act to Establish the COVID-19 Patient Bill of Rights

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Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and Members of the Health Care Insurance and Financial Services Committee:

Good Morning. I am Dr. Norma Desjardins and for nearly thirty years I have been a practicing dentist in Aroostook County. I was born and raised in Van Buren, and following graduation from Tufts School of Dental Medicine in 1992 came home to join a dental practice in Presque Isle. In the spring of 2012, I opened St. Apollonia – a non-profit children’s dental clinic – also in Presque Isle.

I am providing testimony today in support of LD 1. I commend Senator Jackson for sponsoring this important bill. The need in our county is great, and LD 1 ensures that Aroostook County residents and indeed every Maine resident will have timely and convenient access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

Approximately three weeks ago, the President of Northern Maine Community College and the Senior Physician Executive at NML AR Gould Hospital reached out to ask if I would assist in vaccinating County residents at clinics the College and the hospital were organizing. They further asked if I would help to recruit other dentists to participate in this effort.

Unfortunately, I had to tell them that vaccine administration is not currently in a Maine dentist’s scope of practice. This is particularly unfortunate in my area because recruiting a sufficient number of physicians, FNPs, PAs and nurses to staff planned vaccine clinics who must also continue to serve their patients is a near impossibility.

I believe that LD 1, if passed, will allow dentists and other providers to assist in this critical effort to vaccinate our families, friends and neighbors in Aroostook County and across the state, further ensuring that access to a COVID-19 vaccine is not delayed because of our inability to recruit the necessary personnel.

Part D of the bill allows the on-site clinician in charge to “delegate the administration of COVID-19 vaccines within the State to employees, staff, agents or volunteers . . .”

Part D

2. Permitted Delegation of COVID-19 Vaccine Administration. An on-site clinician in charge of a point of dispensing vaccine site with a Memorandum of Understanding that complies with the requirements of section 4 may delegate the administration of COVID-19 vaccines within the State to employees, staff, agents, or volunteers; provided, however, that the on-site clinician in charge is currently licensed by the State as a physician, advanced practice registered nurse or physician assistant and that any employee, staff member, agent or volunteer to whom such authority is delegated under this subsection is subject to the supervision and control of the point of dispensing vaccine site and on-site clinician in charge and has completed the training and observation required in section 3.

In closing I would add that dentists in twenty states, including Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, are currently authorized to administer COVID-19 vaccines. For your information, the following link [comprehensive document for download](#) will provide you with a spreadsheet of states compiled by the American Dental Association.

I urge you to support this critical piece of legislation and thank you for your consideration.