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

I am supporting LD 665. I am in general practice in Portland. As a dentist who has been practicing for over 35 years, I have seen havoc that cancer treatment causes on oral health. Depending on the type of cancer, cancer, and the therapy to treat it can cause tooth loss and bone loss that supports the teeth.

This does not need to be just from head and neck cancer which severely affects and disfigures the mouth but from effects of chemotherapy that dries the oral fluids and causes increase rate of decay. Unfortunately, this decay is not like one gets normally but affects areas that are difficult to treat and maintain. A patient comes to mind that had breast cancer 30 years ago. She maintained immaculate oral health and due to her dry mouth has had numerous cavities and restorations fail and subsequent tooth loss despite all our efforts. Fortunately, she was able to afford complex treatment and frequent visits, but many are not able to do so. I participate in Maine Donated Dental Services and many of my patients I see are because of the effect cancer has had on their oral health. Unfortunately, all those that need to be seen face a long waiting list as they are unable to afford treatment.

Sincerely,



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