



April 18, 2021

Testimony in Opposition to LD 1349: An Act to Increase Transparency in Dental Billing

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

My name is Dr. Michelle Mazur-Kary and I am an endodontist who practices in Auburn Maine and have for over 35 years. Since the pandemic struck, just over one year ago, doing business in Maine (any business) has become increasingly difficult and more expensive. As a health care provider, dentists have always put patient safety and security at the top of their priorities, no matter what the cost. It is the cost of doing business in dentistry to wear gloves, masks, gowns and to use as many disposable pieces of equipment as possible to minimize any transmission of disease. We have done an excellent job of this over the years.

During the pandemic, dentists were responsible to obtain their own PPE. We were required to use specialized equipment like KN95 masks. We placed air purification systems in our offices. Because the demand for our normal working equipment (gloves, masks, gowns, etc.) increased due to the general public use, boxes of gloves in my office increased by over 100%. My gloves were costing about \$12/box and went to approximately \$30/box almost immediately. Other PPE items increased similarly. Not only did the price increase, but we were only allowed to order 3 boxes every 4 days. This added extra shipping and handling fees. These fees changed each week (and continue to increase) and estimating the increased cost per patient per visit would be impossible to estimate and impossible to implement. Dental offices do not have the systems or staff to keep up with the continued increase in dental supplies especially PPE so having to report that fee to patients is not practical nor would it be accurate at any one time.

It is for these reasons I ask your support in opposing LD 1349.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle L. Mazur-Kary, DDS, MPH
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President of Central Maine Endodontics
Past President, Maine Dental Association