

Nancy Foster, RDH,EFDA, EdM.

50 Daisy Lane

Hampden, ME 04444

April 27, 2021

RE: LD 1457

To: Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services:

I am would like to submit written testimony in **favor** of LD 1457. I am sending this testimony because I have been practicing dental hygienists for the last 27 years. I currently work in Maine in academia as an associate professor in a dental hygiene program. I am also an actively practicing dental hygiene in a periodontal office and have been administering local anesthesia in Maine since 2002.

I am in full support to expand the Scope of Practice for Maine Dental Hygienists to include the administration of intra-oral block and infiltration anesthesia under **general** supervision rather than the current direct supervision.

To my knowledge, there are currently nine states that permit this procedure under “general” supervision of a dentist. This general supervision status would permit dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia when the dentist is not in the practice facility. The dentist would need to approve that the dental hygienist could administer the anesthetic agent and approve the patients that may receive the injections. This would increase access to dental care (e.g. scaling and root planing procedures for the treatment of gum disease) when the dentist is away from the practice or when practicing at remote or satellite clinics.

The administration of local anesthesia has been permitted in the statute in Maine for dental hygienists since the late 1990's and to my knowledge; there have been little to no adverse events reported. An approved local anesthesia course and examination is currently required by the Maine Board of Dental Practice for any Maine dental hygienist administering local anesthesia. These courses are currently hosted in Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) accredited dental hygiene programs, which must include the administration of local anesthesia on patients and simulated manikins. The CODA programs are also required to offer an in-depth pharmacology course in addition to the local anesthesia course.

Lastly, dental hygienists in Washington State have been administering local anesthesia since the 1970's hence have over 40 years of safety data and positive track record with hygiene practitioners administering this medicament on dental patients.

Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Foster". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in "Foster".

Nancy Foster, RDH, EFDA, EdM