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Testimony of the Maine Osteopathic Association
Before the Committee on Health and Human Services

In Reference to:

LD 979, An Act To Expand Maine's School-based Health Centers
Public Hearing: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 9:00 AM,(Via Zoom)

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is pleased to provide testimony in support of LD 979, An Act To Expand Maine's School-based Health Centers. This testimony was prepared by David Scaccia, DO, MPH, President of the MOA. Dr. Scaccia is board certified in Family Medicine and Preventative and Occupational Medicine. He practices in Kittery, ME.

The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing approximately 400 osteopathic physicians as well as more than 700 residents and students. Our mission is to “serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.”

LD 979 provides ongoing funding for the Department of Health and Human Services to distribute through a request for proposals process to expand the number of school-based health center sites.

The MOA recognizes the important role of school-based health centers in providing the physical, emotional and mental health services needed for our children to lead healthy and productive lives. Keeping students in their school, in their classroom and focused on their studies improves academic performance. We also support this bills’ commitment to closing existing health disparities based on race, ethnicity or tribal status.

According to a report published in *Current Problems in Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care* Journal, “SBHCs may provide an entry point and source of primary care, with ongoing connections to a medical home, for children who do not otherwise have access to consistent care. They may also provide additional needed care for those youth who already have primary pediatric providers.”ⁱ School-based health centers often are operated as a partnership between the school and a community health organization, such as a community health center, hospital, or local health department. The specific services provided by school-based health centers vary based on community needs and resources. With their funding restored the centers can continue to offer services and will not have to scale back or face closures.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at info@mainedo.org if you have any questions. Thank you.

ⁱ Keeton V, Soleimanpour S, Brindis CD. School-Based Health Centers in an Era of Health Care Reform: Building on History. *Current problems in pediatric and adolescent health care*. 2012;42(6):132-158. doi:10.1016/j.cppeds.2012.03.002.