

April 5, 2021

Health and Human Services Committee

Regarding LD 979, A Bill to Expand Maine's School Based Health Centers

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing in support of LD 979. We have been the fortunate recipients of state grant funding to support our school-based health center since 1993. Over 80% of our student body is enrolled in the center, receiving medical and behavioral health services without having to leave school. Funding has allowed us to staff our center with highly qualified adolescent health care providers. While access to medical and mental health community providers has been very limited, we have been able to provide consistent services and serve as a safety net for care. As one of the most economically disadvantaged counties in Maine, families depend on school-based health services to readily obtain affordable care for their children.

School-based health centers are an economic and efficient use of public health care dollars. Many students can be served for less than the cost of one emergency room visit. Parents don't have to leave work or overcome transportation issues. This model makes great financial sense.

An expansion of funds across the state would allow for other communities to have this valuable resource.

I urge you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Ann Skriletz

Ann Skriletz, R.N., M.S.N.

Blue Devil Health Center

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