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*26 Years of **Full Practice Authority** as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine*

February 9, 2021

**RE: Testimony In Support of LD 119 - "An Act to Increase Faculty in Nursing Education Programs by Amending the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program"**

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and distinguished members of the Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business Committee.

My name is Dr. Valerie Fuller and I am writing to you today as a private citizen from Falmouth and a member of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association's Legislative Committee to request your support of LD 119 "An Act to Increase Faculty in Nursing Education Programs by Amending the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program".

As you may know, faculty shortages in nursing schools across Maine significantly limit the number of new nurses that can be educated. According to data from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing U.S. nursing schools turned away 80,407 qualified applicants from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs in 2019 due in large part to an insufficient number of faculty. We also know that higher compensation in settings outside of academia have driven nurse educators away from teaching. This bill will financially support those nurses who are studying to become nurse educators by repaying educational loans up to \$30,000 for a master's degree and up to \$60,000 for a doctoral degree.

According to a 2017 analysis by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, the state is facing a shortfall of 3,200 Registered Nurses by the year 2025. It is also estimated that more than 25% of the nursing faculty workforce in Maine will retire over the next 1-2 years. Supporting this legislation will assist those interested in becoming nurse educators to prepare our next generation of Maine nurses.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact MNPA ([pam@mnpa.us](mailto:pam@mnpa.us)) if you have questions or comments.

Valerie J. Fuller, PhD, DNP, AGACNP-BC, FNP-BC