

TO: Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement & Business
FROM: Coralie Giles, President of the Maine State Nurses Association, Vice President of National Nurses United, and resident of Brewer, Maine
RE: Opposition to LD 342
DATE: Monday, April 24, 2023

Testimony on Behalf of the Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses United
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic
Advancement & Business

In OPPOSITION to: LD 342, An Act to Streamline Licensing by Matching Federal
Licensing Requirements for Occupations Licensed Federally

Public Hearing: Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 10:00 AM, Cross Building, Room 206

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement & Business:

My name is Coralie Giles. I am a resident of Brewer and have been a registered nurse for nearly 45 years. I currently serve as the President of the Maine State Nurses Association and as a Vice-President of National Nurses United. The Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses United (MSNA/NNU), representing 4,000 nurses and caregivers across the state of Maine, submits this testimony opposing LD 342 and asks for your "No" vote.

LD 342 has the potential to undermine occupational licensing requirements that are crucial to ensuring safe, effective, and therapeutic patient care. As LD 342 was submitted as a concept bill, it is difficult to assess what professions may be included or what the consequences of changes to state licensing and reciprocity rules would be. A bill that covers occupations so generally cannot account for the specific needs of different professions in Maine.

The licensing requirements in Maine law were put in place by the Maine legislature and agencies responding to the needs of Maine. LD 342 is a sweeping bill that changes regulations across professions to match federal licensing requirements for occupations

licensed or certified at the federal level. Whatever these federal licensing requirements are, they were not created specifically with the needs of Maine in mind. Moreover, they may have been created to complement, not replace, state licensing requirements, since most occupations are licensed at the state level, not federally.

LD 342 allows licensing requirements to be weakened. Our state has established minimum standards that nurses, doctors, and other health care workers must meet to practice in our state. Health care professions are generally licensed at the state level, so they should not be included in this legislation. However, without a full draft, it is difficult to assess what federal requirements or certifications may qualify. To the extent that LD 342 does apply to health care professions, weakening these standards could lower the quality and safety of healthcare available within Maine.

MSNA/NNU respectfully asks that committee members vote “No” on this bill or, at the very least, ensure that registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and other health care occupations are not included in the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Coralie Giles RN".

Coralie Giles, RN
President, Maine State Nurses Association
Vice-President, National Nurses United

Coralie Giles
Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses United
LD 342

TO: Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement & Business

FROM: Coralie Giles, President of the Maine State Nurses Association, Vice President of National Nurses United, and resident of Brewer, Maine

RE: Opposition to LD 342

DATE: Monday, April 24, 2023

Testimony on Behalf of the Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses United
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement & Business

In OPPOSITION to: LD 342, An Act to Streamline Licensing by Matching Federal Licensing Requirements for Occupations Licensed Federally

Public Hearing: Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 10:00 AM, Cross Building, Room 206

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement & Business:

My name is Coralie Giles. I am a resident of Brewer and have been a registered nurse for nearly 45 years. I currently serve as the President of the Maine State Nurses Association and as a Vice-President of National Nurses United. The Maine State Nurses Association/National Nurses United (MSNA/NNU), representing 4,000 nurses and caregivers across the state of Maine, submits this testimony opposing LD 342 and asks for your “No” vote.

LD 342 has the potential to undermine occupational licensing requirements that are crucial to ensuring safe, effective, and therapeutic patient care. As LD 342 was submitted as a concept bill, it is difficult to assess what professions may be included or what the consequences of changes to state licensing and reciprocity rules would be. A bill that covers occupations so generally cannot account for the specific needs of different professions in Maine.

The licensing requirements in Maine law were put in place by the Maine legislature and agencies responding to the needs of Maine. LD 342 is a sweeping bill that changes regulations across professions to match federal licensing requirements for occupations licensed or certified at the federal level. Whatever these federal licensing requirements are, they were not created specifically with the needs of Maine in mind. Moreover, they may have been created to complement, not replace, state licensing requirements, since most occupations are licensed at the state level, not federally.

LD 342 allows licensing requirements to be weakened. Our state has established minimum standards that nurses, doctors, and other health care workers must meet to practice in our state. Health care professions are generally licensed at the state level, so they should not be included in this legislation. However, without a full draft, it is difficult to assess what federal requirements or certifications may qualify. To the extent that LD 342 does apply to health care professions, weakening these standards could lower the quality and safety of healthcare available within Maine.

MSNA/NNU respectfully asks that committee members vote “No” on this bill or, at the very least, ensure that registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and other health care occupations are not included in the bill.

Sincerely,

Coralie Giles, RN
President, Maine State Nurses Association
Vice-President, National Nurses United