

Testimony in Support of LD 1797, An Act to Expand Maine's Health Care Workforce by Expanding Educational Opportunities and Providing Tax Credits

May 2, 2023

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business. My name is Ravin Davis. I completed my undergraduate education at the University of New England and am honored to say that I have so far completed my first two years of my medical education also at the University of New England. Thank you for considering my testimony in support of LD 1797.

I grew up in Madison, Maine and continue to call that small town my home. My mother moved two houses down when she started out on her own, and my father only a few blocks away as well. That is just what people do from my town. Leaving for Biddeford, Maine when I entered higher education was like "moving to the big city," as my family would put it. I was a first-generation student to leave and enter university, something few people do in my area. Without realizing at the time of my childhood, being embedded within central Maine provided me a vantage point of the average Mainer's healthcare experiences that is a driving force for my goals.

I received care myself, saw the care those around me received, and completed majority of my shadowing and clinical experiences pre-medical school in central Maine. The common denominator within almost all of my healthcare experiences, not just within the past few years but throughout my entire life, has been the lack of providers serving the area. Turnover in practitioners and healthcare offices has always been high. I remember my family being so relieved to just be accepted as patients at a local family practice, never mind wish for the privilege to choose between providers that fit their specific needs or matched the doctor-patient relationship they wanted. My epileptic father has had at least eight different neurologists throughout my life, and I have seen first-hand the physical struggle in not having a lasting relationship with your doctor; because many doctors just do not stay around here.

My connection to Maine and my healthcare career are deeply interwoven. It is my biggest goal as a physician is to ultimately serve the community that raised me, much like the many providers I have seen come and go. The only difference in my situation is that I intend to grow old a few streets over from my family home and serve the same patients for years. That is just what people do from my town.

When I received an email that I was selected as a 2021 Doctors For Maine's Future scholar, I was honored and grateful, but even more relieved; because this designation carried a guarantee that my third year clinical education must be completed in the state of Maine. This meant for sure that I wouldn't have to leave for at least one more year. It meant that I would learn with the exact population that I hope to complete my residency with and care for long term.

As I am entering my third-year clinical education starting at Maine Medical Center (UNE's newest pilot clinical rotation site), I am already looking ahead towards residency and my hope to match here within the limited available spots. Efforts to expand residency placements in the state of Maine would mean that students like me are better able to do just that. I fought to stay here for my undergraduate education, I fought to stay here for medical school, and I'm still fighting to stay here for residency and beyond. My passion is unfortunately not enough to guarantee my goal even with an overwhelming shortage of physicians to go around. Please consider this opportunity for students like me and the Mainers I hope to make my patients.

Thank you,

Ravin Davis
(Madison, Maine)