

MaineHealth

MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Synernet
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth in Support of LD 149, “An Act to Facilitate Licensure for Credentialed Individuals from Other Jurisdictions” Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Senator Curry, Representative Roberts and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business, I am Sarah Calder, Director of Government Affairs at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 149, “An Act to Facilitate Licensure for Credentialed Individuals from Other Jurisdictions.”

MaineHealth is Maine’s largest integrated non-profit health care system that provides the full continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. MaineHealth is also the state’s largest private employer with over 23,000 care team members, but we are facing significant workforce shortages and have invested heavily in creative and innovative solutions in an effort to fill the current 1,800 openings across the system. These programs cover a broad spectrum from developing entry level employees in front line positions from Environmental Services to training tomorrow’s physicians.

MaineHealth recognizes the contribution our New Mainer/immigrant care team members make every day and we are committed to helping them grow within their careers. For example, through our MaineHealth Center for Workforce Development., we partner with the Immigrant Welcome Center of Greater Portland to offer English language acquisition classes to Maine Medical Center (MMC) employees. The pilot began in January 2019, using a computer-based digital language lab with customized content tailored for MaineHealth and MMC – that then is translated into any language, and builds on the employee’s current knowledge of the English language. Through COVID-19 this training continues as a paid training – providing a stipend for employees who can choose to do the program from home or on-site at a socially distanced and safety-approved computer lab.

We support employees in this class with their learning, career navigation, awareness and wraparound supports by collaborating with local partners. Many care team members have higher education degrees from many other countries – our current training has over 10 languages represented and as

their English language skills improve we also provide guidance into other internal and external career pathway and training opportunities.

As you've heard from others, the legislation before you today is a result of the Working Group to Study Barriers to Credentialing formed by Resolve 2019, Ch. 79. The group, which included Dr. Linda Butler, Administrative Director of Psychiatry at Maine Medical Center, worked to identify barriers and recommend ways to enable foreign-credentialed and foreign-skilled individuals and out-of-state license holders to become part of Maine's workforce and economy. LD 149 is an important step to help ensure new Mainers are able to access employment opportunities using their relevant experience, education, and licensure or credential.

There is no denying that the State of Maine is facing a severe workforce shortage and it is imperative that we look at innovative programs and policy changes that support, attract and retain individuals new to the State in order to address this shortage.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.