

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 629,

“Resolve, To Establish the Task Force to Study Improving Safety and Provide Protection from Violence for Health Care Workers in Hospitals and Mental Health Care Providers”

March 23, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Sarah Calder, Director of Government Affairs at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of the proposed amendment to LD 629, “Resolve, To Establish the Task Force to Study Improving Safety and Provide Protection from Violence for Health Care Workers in Hospitals and Mental Health Care Providers.”

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. Every day, MaineHealth’s 23,000 care team members work tirelessly to support our vision of “Working together so our communities are the healthiest in America,” by providing safe, high-quality care.

Despite maintaining a culture of safety, as acts of violence against healthcare workers continue to rise, the commitment our frontline staff make to caring for all in need comes with more risk. Medical providers take an oath to “do no harm” and because of this, they often put their own safety and health at risk to help a patient. Unfortunately, our current system does not provide a clear path in which to hold individuals who commit acts of violence against health care workers accountable. At times, a District Attorney may choose not to pursue a case, and, in other instances, the victim may be uncomfortable holding a patient accountable for criminal behavior.

With this in mind, the legislation before you today will convene the appropriate stakeholders to address what information is needed to ensure the crime is pursued by the District Attorney, to explore the options for hospitals when there has been an assault on hospital grounds, but the victim does not want to press charges, and to discuss how the victim can be kept apprised of the status of the pending case.

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