

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 1684, “An Act to Strengthen Maine's Workforce by Expanding English Language Acquisition and Workforce Training Programs” Thursday, May 13, 2021

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, I am Sarah Calder, Director of Government Affairs at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 1684, “An Act to Strengthen Maine's Workforce by Expanding English Language Acquisition and Workforce Training Programs.”

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 to help fill the nearly 2,000 open positions across the system, MaineHealth continue to focus on career pathway and learning opportunities for our care team members. These programs cover a broad spectrum from developing entry level employees in Environmental Services to training tomorrow’s physicians.

MaineHealth not only recognizes the contributions our New Mainer and immigrant employees make every day, we also remain committed to retaining and helping them grow within their careers. For example, through our MaineHealth Center for Workforce Development, we continue to partner with the Immigrant Welcome Center of Greater Portland and Voxy to offer English language acquisition classes to Maine Medical Center (MMC) employees within our Patient Care Support Services Department (environmental and food services) as well as Linen. This is a paid training program to support current care team members with their learning, career navigation, and wraparound supports, such as transportation and housing.

Many of our care team members have higher education degrees from many other countries, varying English language levels, and a variety of languages represented – there were over 10 languages represented in our last class. MaineHealth partners with local educational entities, the New Mainers Resource Center and other similar organizations on various

initiatives to help connect new Mainers with seamless employment, training, and educational opportunities.

There is no denying that the State of Maine is facing a severe workforce shortage and it is imperative that we invest in workforce development programs that support individuals new to the state in order to address this shortage. It is for that reason that we support the legislation before you today and the support it provides for adult education programs, English language instruction, and vocational training.

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