

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 374, “An Act to Allow Veterans, Active Duty Service Members and Their Spouses To Apply for Temporary Occupational Licenses and Certifications.” Tuesday, March 2, 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 374, “An Act To Allow Veterans, Active Duty Service Members and Their Spouses To Apply for Temporary Occupational Licenses and Certifications.”

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.

Additionally, MaineHealth actively recruits qualified veterans for our open positions. MaineHealth has partnered with America’s Job Exchange for several years, utilizing their diverse resume database for sourcing initiatives, as well as the vast reach of their job distribution platform which targets multiple Veteran job boards across the country. We also attend (formerly in-person, now virtually) “Maine Hire a Vet” events, as well as regular Career Center events. In addition, we have an on-going relationship with the organization Boots2Roots. Our recruiters have met with Boots2Roots and other organizations to discuss the unique opportunities around sourcing, interviewing, and hiring veterans. Finally, MaineHealth recruiters have been trained through the “Lean Human Capital Recruiter Academy,” and part of the curriculum discusses recruiting and engaging with veterans and other diverse pools of talent.

Like many rural states, Maine faces a shortage of healthcare professionals and this shortage presents particular challenges as we seek ways to

improve the health of our rural communities. These challenges are compounded by having the oldest population in the nation. In fact, over the next decade, MaineHealth estimates that the population within its service area will experience less than one percent growth while the number of individuals 65 or older will increase by 25 percent. It truly is a perfect storm – a large percentage of our workforce is nearing retirement at a time that our rapidly aging patient population will require more health care services.

To that end, while MaineHealth has made significant investments to “grow our own,” legislative action is needed if we’re going to be successful in meeting the increased workforce demands. 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.