



Joint Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development  
Room 209, Cross State Office Building  
March 15, 2018, 1:00pm

Senator Volk, Representative Fecteau and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development:

On behalf of LincolnHealth, a full-service healthcare system with two locations in the coastal communities of Boothbay Harbor and Damariscotta, I am writing to express support of LD 1857, An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Streamline Veterans' Licensing and Certification Regarding Licensed Practical Nurses.

As a health care leader, it is my responsibility to advocate for the delivery of safe, effective, high quality nursing care for patients and residents served by nurses across the State of Maine and within LincolnHealth. As I am sure you are aware we are experiencing a nursing shortage across the state of Maine which includes LincolnHealth. In fact, according to data released last year by the Maine Nursing Action Coalition (MeNAC), Maine's shortage of registered nurses (RNs) is expected to grow to 3,200 by the year 2025 and Maine must increase the number of new RNs by 400 annually and recruit an additional 265 RNs to the state each year to combat this shortage. [NOTE: MeNAC highlights RN data as all of Maine's licensed practical nurse (LPN) programs have closed and the current LPN workforce is aging out of the profession.] These statistics are alarming and the legislation before you today certainly takes a step in the right direction to address the growing shortage. As a veteran of the United States Navy Nurse Corps, I applaud the Legislature for working to help our fellow veterans transition into the civilian workplace and I further support any legislative initiative that helps veterans enter the nursing profession, especially at time when we are facing a tremendous shortage of nurses. Having witnessed firsthand, I know that veterans that have served our country as corpsman or medics have valuable training and clinical experiences unique to the military populations they serve that would easily translate to the care need for our civilian population.

As I mentioned above, LD 1857 is a step in the right direction by providing an opportunity for honorably discharged veterans who have completed the basic course of nursing instruction and have at least 12 months of bedside patient care to sit for the LPN exam. I say a step in the right direction because, while the courses offered in military programs are comprehensive and rigorous, military training does not include, for example, pediatric, obstetrics, or geriatric care. With that said, I encourage the Legislature and this Committee to consider ways in which to bridge the skills and knowledge acquired in the military and provide supports that fill-in the gaps in knowledge not obtained in the military. For the reasons listed above, I urge the Committee to support LD 1857, but in partnership with additional supports to supplement the education our veterans received during active duty. Please feel free to contact me should you need additional information or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Cindy Wade  
Executive VP & COO

LincolnHealth

**Miles Campus:** 35 Miles Street ~ Damariscotta, Maine ~ 04543 (207) 563-1234  
**St. Andrews Campus:** 6 St. Andrews Lane ~ Boothbay Harbor, Maine ~ 04538 (207) 633-2121

[www.lchcare.org](http://www.lchcare.org)