

TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

IN OPPOSITION TO

**L.D. 255, AN ACT TO ALLOW PERSONS LICENSED FOR THE PRACTICE OF
MANICURING TO PROVIDE TREATMENT FOR DIABETES**

Joint Standing Committee on Insurance & Financial Services
Room 427, State House
Monday, February 9, 2009

Good morning Senator Bowman, Representative Treat, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Insurance & Financial Services. I am Andrew MacLean, Deputy Executive Vice President of the Maine Medical Association, and I am speaking in opposition to L.D. 255, *An Act to Allow Persons Licensed for the Practice of Manicuring to Provide Treatment for Diabetes*. The MMA is a professional organization representing more than 3000 physicians, residents, and medical students whose mission is “to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine citizens.”

The MMA opposes L.D. 255 on both scope of practice grounds and the potential negative impact on Maine’s already high health insurance costs. Manicurists are trained in cosmetology and have no medical training, so they cannot be expected to routinely recognize diabetic foot problems and refer the client for follow-up care. Moreover, health insurance costs in Maine are among the highest in the country and the MMA cautions the legislature to carefully consider any legislative proposal that may increase health insurance costs, particularly during the current recession.

While the MMA in the past has supported certain health insurance mandates, I believe that the organization has been very conservative in doing so only when the proposals address a clear gap in the health insurance coverage most Mainers would expect when they buy a comprehensive health insurance policy – such as coverage for contraceptives or breast reconstruction after surgery for cancer. While the MMA has endorsed mandated health insurance benefits for certain *types of treatment*, I can recall no circumstance when the MMA has endorsed a mandate for services provided by a specific *health care practitioner*. I do not believe that the legislature has ever endorsed mandatory health insurance coverage for services provided by an individual with no health care training whatsoever and I would urge the Committee not to do so now.

Thank you for considering the MMA’s concerns about L.D. 255 and I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.