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March 31, 2017

Senator Rodney Whittemore and Representative Mark Lawrence, Co-chairs
Committee on Insurance and Financial Services
Maine Legislature
Augusta, Maine

RE: Support LD 1030

Dear Senator Whittemore, Representative Lawrence, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Academy of Integrative Pain Management (formerly American Academy of Pain Management) to strongly support LD 1030, an act to require non-discrimination policies in providing health care services.

We applaud you for recognizing the importance of ensuring access to quality and affordable health care, as well as to a full range of licensed health care professionals. As the largest pain management organization in the nation, AIPM represents nearly 4,000 clinicians across the country who treat pain. We embrace, as part of our mission statement, an integrative model of care that is patient-centered; considers the whole person; encourages healthful lifestyle changes as part of the first line of treatment to restore wellness; is evidence-based; brings together all appropriate therapeutic approaches to reduce pain and achieve optimal health and healing; and, encourages a team approach. Further, because effective, high-quality pain care often requires multiple providers and multiple interventions to help people with pain achieve optimal wellness, our highest policy priority is to ensure access to, and adequate insurance coverage for, integrative pain care.

Similar to other chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure, chronic pain isn't typically cured, but is managed with a combination of therapies and approaches specific to the individual. However, this kind of interdisciplinary integrative pain care is uncommon, in part because services other than traditional allopathic medical care are often poorly reimbursed and in part because these services are often in short supply in rural and other underserved areas. If we are to optimally treat the 100 million Americans living with pain while reducing the prescription drug overdose epidemic, we must increase access to alternative forms of treatment, including physical therapy, massage therapy, chiropractic care, and more. **We believe that passage of LD 1030 is a vital component of improving patient care by expanding access to alternative methods of pain care, thus reducing society's dependence on opioid analgesic pain medication.**

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I respectfully urge you to sign LD 1030 into law, and I am happy to discuss this issue with you or your staff if necessary. Please feel free to contact me by email at kduensing@aapainmanage.org, or by telephone at 209-425-0468.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katie Duensing".

Katie Duensing, J.D.
Assistant Director for Legislative and Regulatory Affairs
State Pain Policy Advocacy Network (SPPAN)
Academy of Integrative Pain Management

Cc: Senator Justin Chenette