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Maine Family Planning  
Testimony in Opposition to  
LD 1614, An Act to Require an Ultrasound and Certain Counseling Before an Abortion  
May 5, 2023

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Evelyn Kieltyka, I am a family nurse practitioner and the senior vice president of program services at Maine Family Planning, and I am testifying today in opposition to LD 1614, An Act to Require an Ultrasound and Certain Counseling Before an Abortion.

Maine Family Planning provides comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion care, via telehealth and at 18 locations statewide. Every patient who comes to Maine Family Planning receives the comprehensive information and support they need to make decisions about their pregnancy, whether that's continuing the pregnancy towards parenting or adoption, or having a procedural or medication abortion. Every patient receives care according to rigorous, evidence-based, national standards. Maine Family Planning's dedicated healthcare professionals treat all patients with dignity, compassion, and respect. This bill does not. It imposes medically unnecessary requirements and demeans patients by casting doubt on their ability to make informed healthcare decisions.

[Medical experts agree that an ultrasound is not medically necessary for most people seeking abortion care.](#) Our healthcare providers are able to assess, on a case-by-case basis, what procedures and tests are necessary before an abortion. Ultrasound requirements are onerous for providers and patients alike, especially in a vast, rural state like ours, and they do nothing to improve a patient's experience or health outcomes. [Recent large-scale research that included Maine patients demonstrated that history-based screening is sufficient for the vast majority of medication abortions up to 11 weeks since last menstrual period.](#) Roughly two-thirds of abortions at Maine Family Planning fall in that category. Blanket ultrasound requirements are rooted in anti-abortion stigma and reproductive coercion.

If the ultimate goal of this bill is to reduce the number of abortions, we know how to do that – fund and require K-12 comprehensive sexuality education, make contraception free and easily accessible, and invest dramatically in public programs that ease the financial strain of parenting. Requiring ultrasounds before all abortions just stigmatizes essential reproductive health care and erects barriers to care.

For all these reasons, on behalf of Maine Family Planning patients and providers, I urge the committee to reject LD 1614 and vote Ought Not to Pass. Thank you.