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- **SUPPORT** Maine Physicians • **ADVANCE** the quality of medicine in Maine • **PROMOTE** the health of all Maine people

TO: Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Dan Morin, Director, Communications and Government Affairs

DATE: May 5, 2023

RE: **OPPOSED** – LD 1614, An Act to Require an Ultrasound and Certain Counseling Before an Abortion

The Maine Medical Association is Maine's largest professional association representing over 4,300 current and future physicians from all specialties in all practice settings.

Leadership of the MMA cautions legislators from overstepping their impact on medical decision-making by dictating the nature and content of patients' interactions with their physicians.

They believe certain legislative proposals inappropriately infringe on clinical practice and patient-physician relationships, crossing traditional boundaries and intruding into clinical exam rooms without regard to established, evidence-based guidelines for medical care.

LD 1614 falls under the umbrella of proposed laws in Maine and nationwide that require physicians to discuss specific practices that may not be necessary or appropriate at the time of a specific patient appointment, according to the physician's best clinical judgment.

They fail to recognize the complexity and uncertainty involved in medical care. MMA leadership considers end-of-life care for the aged population, heart surgery, end stage renal disease, and abortion no differently.

The Maine Medical Association is a statewide volunteer organization formed in 1853, serving more than 4,300 current and future Maine physicians in all clinical specialties, organizations, and practice settings.

Laws are blunt instruments. The practice of medicine, like health care in general, changes at unprecedented speed. Medicine is a highly complex profession with times of uncertainty.

Legislative mandates regarding the practice of medicine do not allow for the infinite array of exceptions — cases in which the mandate may be unnecessary, inappropriate, or even harmful to an individual patient.

The MMA urges committee members to consider and respect patient autonomy, individual needs, values, and preferences, and vote LD 1614 ONTP.

Thank you for your attention to our comments.