



Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Lisa Margulies, I serve as Vice President of Public Affairs, Maine, for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and I am pleased to submit testimony in support of LD 1432 and LD 1948.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England provides comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care to more than 7,500 people in Maine at four health centers located in Biddeford, Portland, Sanford, and Topsham. People turn to us for affordable, high-quality care including wellness exams, birth control, disease testing and treatment, cancer screenings, abortion care as well as a variety of primary care services.

As a mission driven health care provider, we fundamentally believe everyone should be able to access affordable, high quality sexual and reproductive health care in their communities, no matter where they live or how much money they make, and we advocate for policies that help make this vision a reality. All people deserve to access comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion and gender-affirming care, free from shame, stigma, and intimidation. We see everyone who comes to us regardless of ability to pay, and in a typical year, we provide more than \$1.4 million in free and discounted care to our communities in Maine. For many, we are their only access to the health care system.

At PPNNE, we have a deep appreciation for the ways that policy and policy implementation, however well-intentioned, impacts the lives of our patients as well as the care we deliver. We have witnessed firsthand policies disproportionately impact communities of color, leading to starkly different health outcomes. Whether it is how state agencies respond to a public health crisis like a pandemic, policies to address maternal and infant health, or efforts to reduce rates of cancer, the outcomes for people of color tell the story of what happens when laws are enacted without careful consideration of potential impact. Racial disparities result from a complex set of factors including socioeconomic disadvantages, resource allocation, and biased decision-making.

Robust data collection and analysis are cornerstones of developing and implementing policies that benefit all people in the state. In the 130th session, we supported two bills passed by the legislature and signed by the governor, LD 2 and LD 1610, that strengthened equitable policy development and public access to and



engagement with the legislative process. LD 2 and LD 1610 provided legislators with a powerful tool—racial impact statements—to better understand the racial impacts of their proposals and take intentional steps towards developing more equitable policies. These bills also strengthened the state’s capacity to collect, analyze, and publish data for policy making. LD 1432 and LD 1948 will further advance the goals of these bills by augmenting data used by policymakers, increasing capacity for data analysis, and enhancing data sharing across state government.

LD 1432 and LD 1948 are crucial steps in modernizing and improving Maine’s government and ensuring that our policies and actions benefit all our people. I urge you to vote ought to pass on LD 1432 and LD 1948.