



Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary, my name is Lisa Margulies, I serve as Vice President of Public Affairs for Maine at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and I am pleased to submit testimony in support of LD 2283.

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. 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.

As a mission driven health care provider, we fundamentally believe everyone should be able to get 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.

Gun violence is a public health crisis. The physical and emotional safety of our patients is our foremost concern, and gun violence has a disproportionate impact on the patient population we are proud to serve, especially women, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community:

- One in three women have experienced physical violence with an intimate partner, and women in the U.S. are 21 times more likely to be murdered with guns than women in any other developed nation.<sup>i</sup>
- Intimate partner violence is inextricably linked with mass shootings, with more than two thirds of mass shootings linked to domestic violence or perpetrated by someone with a history of domestic violence.<sup>ii</sup>
- Black men are nearly 10 times more likely to be murdered by gun violence than white men, and Black women three times more likely than white women. In addition, policies like “Stand Your Ground” result in increased victimization of people of color and lead to perpetrators being less likely to be held accountable under the law.<sup>iii</sup>



- The LGBTQ+ community is also disproportionately impacted by gun violence, with people who are LGBTQ+ more than twice as likely to be gun violence victims than people who are cisgender and straight.<sup>iv</sup>
- Nearly 20% of hate crimes are linked to sexual orientation or gender identity, and gun violence accounts for 80% of homicides of Black trans women.<sup>v</sup>

It is also worth noting the real and ever-present threat of gun violence against clinicians and staff providing reproductive health care, especially in this divisive political landscape.

The tragic events in Lewiston underscore the urgency of gun violence prevention policies to protect our patients, staff, and our community. We joined the Maine Gun Safety Coalition last year and support its efforts to pass strong and comprehensive gun safety legislation this year. We fully endorse the priorities of the Coalition, including background checks for all gun sales, extreme risk protection orders, 72-hour waiting periods, and an assault weapons ban.

Law enforcement officials desperately need and are asking for tools to keep communities safe, and family members are often best positioned to notice that a loved one needs help. LD 2283 would create a mechanism that allows family members to alert officials about their concerns and remove access to firearms for people who are a danger to themselves or others. It gives law enforcement officials another pathway to address potentially volatile and dangerous situations and keep Mainers safe.

The policies proposed in this bill would protect the health and safety of our patients, our staff, and our communities. We strongly urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 2283. Thank you for your efforts to defend Mainers, their lives, and their futures.

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<sup>i</sup> Steffi Badanes, *The Gun Violence Epidemic Is Getting Worse And We Need To Talk About It*, June 4, 2019, <https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/blog/the-gun-violence-epidemic-is-getting-worse-and-we-need-to-talk-about-it>

<sup>ii</sup> John Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, *Study: Two-Thirds of Mass Shootings Linked to Domestic Violence*, <https://efsgv.org/press/study-two-thirds-of-mass-shootings-linked-to-domestic-violence/>

<sup>iii</sup> Id.

<sup>iv</sup> Sandy Hook Promise, *Facts And Statistics About The Impact Of Gun Violence On LGBTQ+ People*, <https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/blog/news/facts-and-statistics-about-the-impact-of-gun-violence-on-lgbtq-people/>

<sup>v</sup> Id.