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Testimony of Rep. Dan Ankeles in Support of
**LD 163, An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Federally Approved
Nonprescription Oral Hormonal Contraceptives and Nonprescription Emergency
Contraceptives**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and honorable members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. I am Representative Dan Ankeles, and I serve House District 100, a central slice of Brunswick adjacent to the district represented by Representative Arford. It's my honor to once again ask for your support for **LD 163, An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Federally Approved Nonprescription Oral Hormonal Contraceptives and Nonprescription Emergency Contraceptives**, a measure that nearly became law in the previous legislature.

I'm always happy to lend my support to Rep. Arford's tireless efforts to get people better health care coverage, but I think it's particularly important for me to speak on this specific bill. As people returning might remember, this bill was one of the 83 bills from both chambers and from both sides of the aisle that we lost during last year's budget debate as we ran into the brick wall of statutory adjournment. As someone who was a member of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee during the time this occurred, I feel bound to ensure that we rescue and re-pass as much of this unfinished business as we possibly can. We owe it to Representative Arford and all those who worked so hard on last year's version of her bill.

For context, the Democrats on the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee last spring determined that her bill had a minimal and very manageable fiscal impact despite the current financial climate, and we even got the bill all the way to the Governor's desk. I would very much doubt that determination has changed, even with an almost wholesale swap out of most of our members.

I'll close by saying again what I said two years ago: I feel strongly that medicinal forms of birth control should be covered, whether or not they require a prescription. This proposal is fair, it's fiscally prudent, and it covers an essential element of the daily lives of so many people in Maine and throughout the nation. Birth control is a component of healthcare, and this type of law helps people of all income levels achieve the same access. This access means that people have more control over their lives, which is more important than ever at a time when we as a nation are

engaged in a fierce debate about what happens when a pregnancy isn't prevented. I hope that the committee will see fit to vote out a favorable recommendation.

Thank you for reading and for your consideration. I'll hope for a positive outcome in the work session.