

Michaela Cavallaro
PORTLAND
LD 143

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, I'm Michaela Cavallaro, I live in Portland, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 143.

Family planning care allows people to make the reproductive healthcare choices that are right for them. In my early 20s, I was working a very low-paying job (in an Americorps-like program) and needed both STI testing and a colposcopy after an abnormal pap smear. I was scared and broke, but I was able to access timely, affordable and compassionate care through Planned Parenthood.

The results were benign, and after a short course of treatment I resumed my career and my life. When I decided 10 years later to pursue pregnancy, I was able to do so with no negative consequences from my earlier health situation. That care allowed me to plan my family on my terms -- and my daughter is now an 18-year-old college freshman, who served as manager for two MPA state championship girls' varsity teams in her senior year of high school. She is excelling in her studies and planning her career.

Like I did in my 20s, many Mainers face barriers to care, including the financial and logistical challenges of accessing a provider. That's particularly true in rural areas. What's more, family planning providers are often the only medical professional some patients see in a year. That gives them a critical role as a safety net and medical line of first defense for thousands of Mainers.

Since the fall of Roe v. Wade, our state has twice elected a pro-reproductive rights majority in the statehouse. Mainers care about access to reproductive health care, and we are counting on the legislators we supported to safeguard that access.

Please vote Ought to Pass on LD 143 and fund Maine's family planning care providers.

Thank you,
Michaela Cavallaro
Portland ME