

Joshua Barber
Portland
LD 143

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Joshua Barber, I live in Portland, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 143.

I am here to speak on behalf of the family I know the best, my own. Simply, my wife and daughter may not be here as happy and healthy as they are without the family planning care offered in Maine. My wife had previously not been afforded access to basic reproductive health care as part of her primary care until she moved to Maine. The lack of care available to her without restrictions or privacy concerns meant she could not speak to a medical professional about her gynecological health until well into her 20's.

Since we moved here, she has found comprehensive and patient focused care. She had our daughter at an incredibly professional and supportive hospital in Portland and they both received excellent pre and postnatal care. Continuing to fund family planning care means my daughter will never be without these essential services. I can proudly raise my family here knowing this is a foundational value in our State.

But there is a decided lack of opportunities for some Mainers further from our city centers and we need to remedy that as well. Family planning providers are often the first and only medical provider patients see in a year, making the family planning care network a critical safety net for the tens of thousands of patients who access services from these providers each year. Continuing this funding is an investment in the economic and health outcomes of Mainers and can attract young families like mine to our state in the current climate of uncertainty in other states. Talented young professionals, especially medical professionals, are seeking a place where reproductive health care is valued and protected. Let's give them additional reasons to join us here in Maine by passing LD 143.

Thank you.