

Valerie Donohue  
South Bristol  
LD 865

Dear Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Committee of Health and Human Services,

My name is Valerie Donohue. I am a mom to a 2 year old boy and a family physician. I live in South Bristol and practice primary care and obstetrics in Damariscotta. I am writing to ask you to support LD 865.

All families deserve to have personalized lactation care. This bill will allow all private practice IBCLCs to credential and accept Mainecare. Adjusting to life with a newborn is challenging, even more so when there are challenges with feeding. Breastfeeding has numerous benefits for mom (decreased rates of breast and ovarian cancer and type 2 diabetes, and promotes bonding between mother and baby) and baby (decreased rates of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), childhood obesity, asthma, type 1 diabetes, infections). It is also often more convenient and cost effective than formula feeding.

I believe that all families should have access to clinical IBCLC services. I work with many families enrolled in MaineCare who unfortunately do not receive the support they need with lactation due to lack of providers who accept their insurance in our area. This in turn often leads to less mothers exclusively breastfeeding their babies and often for shorter periods of time than for families who receive IBCLC support. Expanding MaineCare coverage to include clinical IBCLC services will be a huge benefit for Maine families.

Again, I am asking you to support LD 865, IBCLC reimbursement for Mainecare, to provide additional access to IBCLCs and equitable care to all Mainers.

Thank you for your time,

Valerie Donohue, MD