

Hannah Lord
Portland
LD 865

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee of Health and Human Services, my name is Hannah Lord, and I live in Portland. I am writing to urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 865 An Act to Require MaineCare to Reimburse for Lactation Services in the Homes of Eligible Persons.

For a decade I served Maine as a Certified Full Spectrum Doula working closely in the homes of families in some of their most vulnerable moments during their pregnancy, birth and postpartum experiences. Years into my work as a doula I trained to be a Certified Lactation Counselor. I knew how valuable it was to my clients to have a certified professional able to support them in their homes through the challenges and triumphs of feeding their baby. Having lactation support in a hospital setting is amazing, but a lot of the time challenges begin days or weeks after the parent is home from the hospital.

I know from first hand experience how valuable lactation specialists are in our community. After I was a gestational surrogate six years ago, I decided to pump and donate milk to other families in Maine who had low milk supply and needed support. I pumped every two hours trying to remove a clogged milk duct and was extremely sleep deprived, even without a baby! On my way to a lactation consultant visit I almost got into a major car accident just because of how exhausted I was.

My son was born twelve years ago and I was a single parent who didn't have a car license. Thankfully my son and I were able to continue our lactation journey together past a year. There was so much trial and error I had to manage on my own because I lacked access to the support systems I deserved. Having an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant come into my home to provide educational and compassionate care to me during a really intense time in my life would have been life changing!

Support for parents is essential to give infants a great start in life. For these reasons, and many more, I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 865.

Thank you for your time.

In appreciation,

Hannah Lord
Portland