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LD 117

An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services

My name is Aspen Ruhlin, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Mabel Wadsworth Center. First, I would like to thank the Chairs Senator Ingwersen and Representative Meyer, along with the rest of the Health and Human Services Committee. Mabel Wadsworth Center is an independent feminist sexual and reproductive health center that has been providing care in Bangor since 1984. Our services include abortion care, prenatal care, STI testing and treatment, contraception, primary care, and more. We are urging you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 117: An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services.

Based on the nature of our services and the fact that we provide trauma-informed care, it is probably not surprising to learn that we provide care to many victims and survivors of sexual assault. Sometimes that care may be shortly after and as a direct result of experiencing sexual violence. Sometimes that care is years down the line with survivors simply accessing what they need. Similarly, sexual assault services are accessed by victims and survivors both in the immediate aftermath of the violence they’ve experienced and years down the line.

Sexual assault services cover a wide range of resources that help improve the lives of all victims and survivors of sexual assault, whether that’s legal support, an advocate accompanying a victim to the hospital, or a kind voice on the other end of a hotline. These services are absolutely essential to uplift victims and survivors and to fight for a future where this violence is unthinkable. Because of this, Mabel Wadsworth Center urges you to vote, “ought to pass” on LD 117.