

Michelle Zagardo
Bethel
LD 253

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Michelle Zagardo and I am a constituent from Bethel. I am writing to you today to strongly advocate for the right of individuals who receive MaineCare to have access to abortion services covered by their health insurance. I understand that the issue before this committee is one of great importance, and I believe that every person, regardless of their income or their insurance provider, deserves the ability to make decisions about their reproductive health, free from financial barriers or discrimination. MaineCare is a crucial program that provides health coverage to thousands of Maine residents, many of whom are low-income, and facing significant health challenges. For these individuals, having access to comprehensive health care is essential, and that includes the right to seek an abortion when needed. Denying abortion coverage for those enrolled in MaineCare is an act of inequity that disproportionately affects the most vulnerable populations in our state. Access to abortion care is a matter of both health and human dignity. Without adequate coverage, people are forced to navigate financial and logistical hurdles that delay or prevent them from obtaining the care they need. This can lead to serious physical, emotional, and economic consequences, particularly for those who already face challenges in accessing health care services. Additionally, the decision to have an abortion is deeply personal and should be made by the individual in consultation with their healthcare provider, without interference from the state or any external party. Maine has long been a state that prides itself on supporting the autonomy and rights of its residents. This includes the right to make personal, medical decisions free from government mandates, and that includes the right to abortion care. Providing abortion coverage under MaineCare is not only a matter of equity; it is also a matter of public health. Restricting access to abortion services puts individuals at risk and can result in adverse consequences for their physical and mental well-being. By ensuring that MaineCare covers abortion services, Maine can lead the way in safeguarding reproductive rights and ensuring that all people—regardless of their economic status—can make the decisions that are right for them. I urge you to support policies that allow all Mainers, including those who rely on MaineCare, to have full access to the reproductive health services they need. Thank you for your time, your attention to this matter, and your commitment to ensuring that all people in Maine can make health care decisions that are right for them.

With Gratitude, Michelle Zagardo