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Assistant Majority Leader

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Jill Duson, and I am the Senate Assistant Majority Leader, proudly serving Senate District 27, which is part of Portland and Westbrook.

I am writing today in strong opposition to LD 253, LD 682, LD 886, LD 887, LD 975, LD 1007 and LD 1154 – a group of bills that would take our state backward and restrict the rights of our mothers, daughters, friends and neighbors.

These proposals are not unique to Maine. Across the country, since the fall of *Roe*, too many states have exerted their draconian will on the lives of pregnant people. The result has been the [devastation of reproductive care systems](#), and, of course, the burden ends up falling more heavily on low-income folks and people of color.

Throughout my life, I have seen the importance of maintaining access to abortion and reproductive care. Growing up, my family had little money and even less access to quality health care. The one exception was the care that our local Planned Parenthood clinic provided. When I was 17 and visiting Planned Parenthood was still very much taboo, I went to the clinic for regular gynecological services, where they discovered a serious cervical issue. Thankfully, the clinicians were able to get me the care I needed, and I went on to have two lovely children.

I know my experience is not unique. So many people start sentences with “Planned Parenthood saved my life by...” That is why, during my time serving the city of Portland, I have fought to maintain access to care. As mayor and on the City Council, my colleagues and I worked to keep the doors of the Congress Street clinic open and welcoming. In my first term in the Senate, I proudly stood in support of legislation to keep the government out of abortion care decisions, and against efforts similar to what we see again today. Today, I hope we move past these proposals and toward work that lifts up our reproductive care system for all Maine people.

Since I entered that clinic at the age of 17, I have seen the freedoms of people across our country expand and then sadly shrink. I love being a Mainer, and I would be deeply disappointed to see our state join the chorus of states who have ignored the will of their people by instituting restrictions on abortion and reproductive care. For myself and so many people I have come to know in my life, I oppose LDs 253, 682, 886, 887, 975, 1007 and 1154.