



Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Lisa Margulies, I serve as Vice President of Public Affairs, Maine, for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and I am pleased to submit testimony in support of LD 1277.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England provides comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care in approximately 10,000 visits per year in Maine at four health centers located in Biddeford, Portland, Sanford, and Topsham, as well as online via telehealth. People turn to us for affordable, high-quality care including wellness exams, birth control, disease testing and treatment, cancer screenings, abortion care, gender-affirming care, as well as a variety of primary care services.

As a mission driven health care provider, we fundamentally believe everyone should be able to access affordable, high quality sexual and reproductive health care in their communities, no matter where they live or how much money they make, and we advocate for policies that help make this vision a reality. All people deserve to access comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion and gender affirming care, free from shame, stigma, and intimidation. We see everyone who comes to us regardless of ability to pay, and in a typical year, we provide more than \$1.2 million in free and discounted care to our communities in Maine. For many, we are their only access to the health care system.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England is proud to offer a spectrum of reproductive and sexual health care services, including gender affirming care. Gender affirming health care refers to a broad range of services to support and affirm transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming people and their physical and mental wellbeing, including mental health counseling, gender affirming hormone therapy, and non-medical social transition. Gender affirming care is individualized, age-appropriate, standard-of-care health care that is supported by every major US medical association as safe, effective, best-practice care.

Gender affirming health care is under direct and constant attack at the federal and state level, as are transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming patients and their clinicians. From a federal perspective, the Trump Administration has announced a number of Executive Orders and Proclamations that potentially undermine, prohibit, and even criminalize access to gender affirming health care.ⁱ At the same, there is a continuing risk that politicians in states in which gender affirming care is limited or

even banned will attempt to reach into states in which this care is legal and interfere with the provision of care, as with abortion. This risk is no longer abstract. As one example, Texas attorney Ken Paxton recently demanded records from a Seattle Hospital as well as PFLAG, a national LGBTQ+ nonprofit.ⁱⁱ Moreover, a number of bills brought by Maine lawmakers this session attempt to attack transgender and nonbinary people's rights and health care.ⁱⁱⁱ

Last year, the 131st Legislature reaffirmed our state's commitment to essential health care by passing a comprehensive shield law to protect providers and patients of legal reproductive and gender affirming care from threats of hostile actions by out-of-state actors attempting to impose restrictive laws from their states in Maine. LD 1277 is an extension of that bill and an additional level of protection for patients and clinicians who may be a target of hostile actions despite providing legal—and life-saving—medical care here in Maine.

Given the ways that which health care data is being weaponized against patients and providers, LD 1277 increases privacy protections for patients receiving and providers offering gender affirming hormone therapy by removing the requirement that testosterone prescriptions be reported to Maine's Prescription Monitoring Program. *This does not impact the underlying scheduling of testosterone under federal law.*

Increasing privacy protections for personal data is a crucial step in safeguarding health care access. As states across the country severely restrict or entirely ban access to gender affirming care, our state can play an even more critical role in providing care and making sure that those in need can access care professionally and privately. No one should fear harassment, investigation, or prosecution for seeking, providing, or assisting another in accessing health care. Patients' health information should be private. For these reasons, I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1277.

ⁱThe White House, *Protecting Children from Chemical and Surgical Mutilation*, January 28, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-children-from-chemical-and-surgical-mutilation/>; *Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions*, January 20, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/initial-rescissions-of-harmful-executive-orders->

[and-actions/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/); *Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism*, January 20, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>

ⁱⁱ Harper, Karen, *Seattle Children's Hospital won't have to provide trans patient records to Texas under new settlement*, April 22, 2024, <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/22/texas-trans-health-care-investigation-seattle/>; Wagner, Bayliss, *Texas district judge blocks Ken Paxton's demands for PFLAG gender-affirming care records*, March 25, 2024, <https://www.statesman.com/story/news/politics/state/2024/03/25/texas-judge-blocks-ag-paxton-demands-gender-affirming-care-records-transgender-minors-privacy/73095581007/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund, *After Mainers Elect Pro-Reproductive Rights Majority to Statehouse, Some Lawmakers Seek to Take Away Rights, Access to Care*, February 3, 2025, <https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/planned-parenthood-maine-action-fund/press-releases/after-mainers-elect-pro-reproductive-rights-majority-to-statehouse-some-lawmakers-seek-to-take-away-rights-access-to-care>