

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, I'm Francesca Basile, I live in Kittery, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 335.

For the past several years, I have dealt with reproductive health issues that are at times debilitating. Blood loss that has caused me to pass out at work, weakness that prevents me from leaving the house, pain that has forced me to pull over on I-95, so sudden and overwhelming that I'm unable to drive.

Over the years, I've dealt with these problems with the support of the excellent gynecology team at York Hospital. I'm privileged to have health insurance that covers the hormonal birth control that keeps me functional and surgical procedures that have given me temporary relief, not to mention the countless exams and ultrasounds required to monitor my condition. I have supportive family and friends, and a job with understanding management that allows me to work remotely when needed.

But I know that not everyone has these advantages. For those without health insurance or financial resources, reproductive health centers that receive funding from the state are critical. If I couldn't get reproductive healthcare, I would not nearly be the productive member of society that I am today. I'd work less, I wouldn't be out spending money at local businesses, I wouldn't be an active part of my community. This is the situation that is faced by those who can't get the help they need. When someone is so debilitated from a reproductive health issue that they can't leave their house, then they're not helping this state reach its potential. It's in Maine's best interest to keep its residents healthy. And when attacks on reproductive healthcare at the federal level are creating a new level of urgency, we can't afford to wait on this additional funding, when waiting comes at the expense of Mainer's health.

By providing state-level funding for the family planning care network, LD 335 would help maintain access to family planning care services, from birth control to cancer screenings to diagnoses of infections and wellness checks. Overall, it helps the most vulnerable Mainer's access healthcare when they need it. Please vote Ought to Pass on LD 335. Thank you.