

Barbara Oesterlin-Heath
Whitefield
LD 335

Dr. Barbara Oesterlin-Heath
Whitefield, ME 04353
February 23, 2026

Dear Legislative members,

I am in support of LD 335. I am a mother of 2 grown sons and was a healthcare provider , a dentist, at two public health clinics in Maine during my career. I had many talks with mothers with low incomes or relying n on support from Mainecare. I had some personal conversations where some had wished that they had had better means and finances to take care of their children's health needs. Many Mainers don't want their tax dollars to support programs like Mainecare , which provide specific dental services until one is 18. Once one turns 18, the treatment allowed by the guidelines is reduced to only care for emergencies , severe pain or infection.

The irony of not providing good safe reproductive care , contraception, or the right to an abortion , if desired , will require Maine tax payers to shoulder the costs of gynecological complications, the costs of unwanted pregnancies becoming children supported by Maine taxpayers for many health and social services required. In addition, many women of all economic levels who want children will struggle with good reproductive care in Maine, as our rural hospitals and clinics continue to close and shut down their maternity services. It is a scary time to be pregnant a in Aroostook County. One example is Houlton 's hospital's recent closure of its maternity care services. One pregnant mother in early labor was raced by ambulance over bumpy roads while a doctor was pressing on her to keep her from hemorrhaging until they could get to Presque Isle. Incidents like this are keeping good Ob-Gyn's from coming to rural areas in states like Maine . This bill could backfire and hurt the care of all women whether pregnancies are desired or not.

I believe that women should have the right to determine the direction of their own lives , the care of their own bodies , and one of the hardest decisions , whether to bring another life into this world. Contraception should be easy to access for all, at all economics levels. Today's economy is making these choices more difficult all the time for families.

The financial stability of a woman, the support and stability of relationships at home, and the health of the potential mother , are factors that ultimately only a woman can make. This choice should not be left up to others outside the family to decide.

We need to have Maine laws, financial support , and social services in place to support the right to life of all babies from Cradle to Grave . If the legislature and Maine citizens don't want to spend the money to support all babies from Cradle to Grave , then the choice whether to be allowed to use contraception(abortion if necessary) and have access to good reproductive care is a no brainer.

Please support LD 335 and allow women to decide the future that they want for themselves and their families.

Thank you,

Dr. Barbara Oesterlin-Heath DMD