

Misty Yates
West Paris
LD 335

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Misty Yates, I live in West Paris, ME, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 335.

As a 16-year-old living in rural Maine, my local Planned Parenthood clinic was my first experience with “adult” healthcare. A friend and I walked there together (solidarity makes scary things bearable) to make appointments for our first gynecological exams and found the site & staff inviting and full of information. Our first reproductive healthcare appointments took place a few weeks later without issue and I have continued to receive regular family planning care for the past 38 years, many of those appointments with Planned Parenthood in whatever town I lived in.

A person’s right to healthcare should be undeniable and without barrier. We all deserve to be healthy, and to receive quality, timely, and affordable care. When we as individuals are healthier, our neighborhoods are healthier. We can be more active in our communities, play harder, work longer, and contribute more to the greater good of all.

In Maine, access to healthcare is becoming harder to come by. Reduction in family planning funding makes these challenges even more intolerable. In many communities, a family planning provider is the only provider within reasonable driving distance. Easy access to preventative care for men & women, reproductive care, maternity care, and quality pre-natal care are foundations that allow people to be healthy, have healthy children, and thrive in their communities.

Unfortunately, attacks on reproductive health care at the federal level have greatly impacted the ability of Mainers to receive the care they need and deserve. The care that Mainers rely on to continue to be Mainers. This has caused a new level of urgency in our state to safeguard Mainers’ access to quality care. I am horrified that anti-abortion lawmakers have recently announced plans to permanently “defund” abortion providers through the next federal budget reconciliation package. Planned Parenthood is not an “abortion” provider; they are a “healthcare” provider, and our Maine communities need them.

Thank you for reading - please vote Ought to Pass on LD 335.