



Christian Civic League of Maine

Associated with Focus on the Family

Sen. Sanborn, Rep. Tepler and honored members of the Health Care, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee, my name is Carroll Conley, and I am the executive director of the Christian Civic League of Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition today to LD 1703.

Earlier today we placed phone calls to determine what medical services are offered at the Maine Family Planning locations across the state to compare medical services that are available at the federally qualified health centers. We focused on four rural clinics: Fort Kent, Calais, Dexter, and Norway. In regard to well-child services, only one of the eighteen locations (Ellsworth) offers those services. We were told "there is no family support; we deal with women, not children." In regard to radiological services, we were told that it's very limited in regard to equipment at each facility. However, the only time radiological services are available is if a woman is seeking an abortion and needs to date the pregnancy. We were also told that Maine Family Planning does not offer mammogram services. They only make referrals. Again, I don't know how the assertion can be made that women in either rural or urban centers will not have access to vital health services if MFP does not get this funding when in fact all of these vital services are readily available in more areas all over the entire state of Maine.

The argument that these funds will not be used for abortion services does not in any way assuage the concerns of the majority of Mainers who do not believe tax funds should be used in organizations to perform abortions. Again, I remind you of the Tolland group polling that was done at the end of April and the beginning of May 2019 that showed 62% of Mainers do not want to see tax funds used for abortion services. For those of you that are making the argument that this particular money is not being used for abortion services, let me ask you a question. I was a headmaster of Christian schools in Massachusetts and Maine. State funding such as voucher programs are not allowed for religious schools because taxpayers do not want to see their funds used to promote a religion with which they may not agree. If you use the same logic regarding this funding request, how would you feel about allowing religious schools to receive state funds as long as they just use those funds for custodial work, math classes with no particular religious bent, or athletics for those schools? I urge you to vote no on LD 1613.