

Hello good afternoon to everyone. My name is Evelyn Hernandez and I live in Westbrook, ME. I am here today with Presente Maine, a group that represents the Hispanic community in Maine. I come with the intention of letting you know the sorrows and difficulties that we go through due to not having access to medical care.

We would like to be granted MaineCare eligibility so we can address our concerns. Many times we feel sick or need a dental check-up and for fear of such high bills we refrain from going to a clinic; Sometimes we are denied care when we say we don't have health insurance.

Recently, I was pregnant. My due date was not long after the law changed to cover pregnant people. MaineCare was able to cover my delivery, but as soon as I gave birth, I lost my MaineCare. Postpartum care is so critical, and that time in a person's life, after giving birth, is one of the most medically vulnerable times. Mothers need care so they can be their best for their babies. How can we take care of babies while ignoring their mothers?

Apart from being a mother, I am a worker. I have worked for years in seafood processing here in Maine. I work very hard and contribute to the social safety net through regular deductions from my salary. There are many of us who pay into Medicaid through our paychecks and we are not benefiting from insurance even though we are contributing to the system. We don't complain about that; on the contrary it seems good to us; but if they make deductions from our pay we should also have that benefit.

I like to work and I like to contribute to the health and safety of my community. I just want to be considered part of that same community and have the same rights as any other Maine resident. I would like my contributions and efforts to be recognized, and I would like to be treated with the same dignity as anyone else.

We think that medical care should be for everyone without extinction of person.

Thank you for taking us into account and listening to us. Thank you in advance.