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**Testimony in Support of LD 199**

**"An Act to Improve the Health of Maine Residents by Removing Exclusions to the MaineCare Program"  
March 28, 2023**

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is George Hill and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of Maine Family Planning in support of LD 199, "An Act to Improve the Health of Maine Residents by Removing Exclusions to the MaineCare Program."

Fundamentally, Maine Family Planning believes that health care is a human right. We believe that all people deserve access to health care services that enable them to live a healthy life and contribute to their families and communities.

Maine has not always excluded immigrants from accessing MaineCare. This coverage was stripped from our immigrant friends and neighbors in 2011. Last session we were able to build back coverage for immigrants who are pregnant and those under the age of twenty-one. Now we need to finish the work of restoring access for all immigrants.

As providers of sexual and reproductive health care services throughout the state, we are on the frontlines of protecting public health. As a Title X grantee, we are committed to providing family planning services, including testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy options counseling, and contraceptive counseling to all who need them, regardless of their immigration status or their ability to pay. But as providers focused on sexual and reproductive health care, we cannot always offer all the services that people need and deserve. Managing diabetes, hypertension, and other common medical conditions requires regular, routine primary care. And we know that folks who are uninsured and low-income delay accessing routine care, which ultimately contributes to lower quality of life, increased emergency services utilization, and lower life expectancy.

Restoring access to MaineCare for all immigrants makes sense not only from a human rights perspective, but from an economic perspective as well. International immigrants make enormous contributions to our state's population and economic growth. This investment in their health and wellness just makes sense, and we urge the Committee to vote unanimously Ought to Pass on this important legislation before you.

Thank you,

George A. Hill  
President & CEO  
Maine Family Planning