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they/them/theirs
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LD 616 Ought to Pass

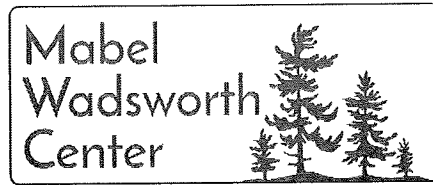
Representative Kuhn, Senator Pierce, and members of the joint committee of Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services, my name is Aspen Ruhlin, and I am here representing Mabel Wadsworth Center. Mabel Wadsworth Center is the only independent, not-for-profit, feminist health center in Maine. We provide comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare, including prenatal care, abortion care, birth control, STD testing and treatment, cancer screenings, and other wellness care.

Mabel Wadsworth Center has been providing sexual and reproductive healthcare for folks living in the greater Bangor area for over 38 years. We have an excellent reputation in our community for providing high-quality, client-centered and trauma-informed healthcare.

I am speaking on behalf of our organization to encourage you to support LD 616, An Act To Protect Health Care Professionals Providing Reproductive Health Care Services.

As a center that provides abortion care, it has been historically difficult to obtain medical malpractice coverage for our center and our providers. This is due to lack of options available to us and high costs. Research tells us that abortion is safer than pregnancy and delivery, and complications are very rare. As a result, malpractice claims related to abortion care are few and far between. The fact remains, however, to provide abortion care, malpractice insurance coverage is required. Protecting malpractice insurance options will protect our center and providers. This will allow us to maintain and increase access to abortion care in the state of Maine.

Our friends and colleagues in other states who provide abortion care have experienced their malpractice carriers not renewing their coverage due to them providing abortion care. When we renew our malpractice insurance annually, we feel uncertainty and



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concern about whether or not we will be “dropped” by our insurance company. Passage of this bill would alleviate the uncertainty around renewal and additional costs of malpractice due to providing abortion. This would ensure continuous coverage of our center and providers, resulting in consistent access and care.

Our providers deliver care and retain medical licensure in multiple states. This bill would protect their licenses and their ability to provide abortion care in our state, if the worst should happen and they are the target of an anti-choice malpractice claim in another state. Again, passage of LD 616 would maintain access to this critical health care to the residents of our state.

We urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 616. Thank you.