

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, my name is April Duval, I'm from New Sharon, and I'm here today in strong support of LD 935 and asking you to vote Ought to Pass, because equal access to abortion is an equal rights issue and financial privilege should not determine access.

Being poor has meant that I have received countless messages about what I do and don't deserve in life. But MY message is that poor people deserve the same access to abortion as people who are not poor. For so many, myself included, abortion is necessary to break the cycle of poverty for the chance to raise healthy families that can thrive.

When I needed an abortion, there was not time to wait. There was not time to save and budget. Having insurance that covered it was the only way I was able to pursue my life and family goals. I was raised to respect and practice thoughtful planning, hard work, and personal accountability. When my mom dropped me off at college she sent me with two important resources: \$300 for books and coverage under her health insurance. The rest was on me to succeed.

During the second semester of my junior year, my birth control failed and I found myself staring at a positive pregnancy test. Just as quick and simple as that. After honest discussion with my boyfriend and a thorough moral inventory, it was clear that abortion was the right choice for us. I was 20, a full-time student with good grades and a part time job that paid minimum wage. We had no car, were 4 hours away from any family that could help with childcare, with \$100 in our savings and families that did not have the ability to help financially. Choosing to bring a child into this situation did not align with my values or family plan.

When I called the insurance company, the representative hesitantly asked me to repeat myself when I asked if they covered abortion. That yes changed my life. No copay, no upfront costs, just the ability to show up and access this healthcare. Coordinating around finals, work, transportation from a friend and the office's availability, my appointment was scheduled for 10 days later, over an hour away.

I've never doubted whether this was the right choice. I'm not here to convince anyone of whether abortion is right or wrong, that's not what this vote is about. I'm here to explain, with absolute confidence, that love is not the only resource needed to raise healthy families. So often, as it was for me, this decision is based around the inability to provide sufficient resources for a child. I am grateful, every day, that I happened to have insurance that covered abortion. I'm so much closer to reaching the goals of my family plan today than I was 13 years ago, but that is directly related to the access I had when the need was imperative.

We live in a system where different privileges provide us different access to opportunities and resources. But insurance that covers abortion care should not be a

privilege, it should legally be our right. Equal access to abortion IS equal rights, and I count on your votes to reflect that.

Thank you for your time.