

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and Members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee. I am the Rev. Sara Bartlett. I live in Auburn, and the church I serve is in the Oxford Hills area where I am an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. I Urge you to vote for LD 263, LD 616, and LD 935.

The ability of a person to access appropriate medical care is most important, yet continually not accessible, for those who are low income or for other reasons do not have access to what they, and their doctors, deem best practice for their situation. As an ordained pastor, I am called to speak on behalf of those who live on the margins of society and for those who cannot speak for themselves. I stand before you all to advocate for all persons, and their doctors, to be able to have access to what is needed for anyone who needs appropriate reproductive healthcare.

I first learned about the importance of appropriate reproductive care from my maternal grandmother, and my mother; both were nurses in Maine in the mid 20th century and would tell stories of patients who found themselves pregnant and unable to access the medical care they needed for their own bodies. The results were disastrous; patients died.

Throughout my life I continue to hear stories of those who have been unable to access appropriate reproductive care. This is not what my Christian faith wants for humankind. Jesus was one who healed women when they were bleeding, often those women who society ignored. Today, you have an opportunity to help make sure every Mainer can access the care they need and every medical provider can be empowered to give that care.

I encourage you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 263, LD 616, and LD 935.

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