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Testimony of Representative Laura Supica introducing
LD 1343, An Act to Protect the Reproductive Freedom of Maine People by Preempting the
Field of Abortion Regulation
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and members of the Committee on Judiciary, I am Representative Laura Supica and I am honored to represent part of Bangor in the Maine Legislature. Today, I present to you **LD 1343, An Act to Protect the Reproductive Freedom of Maine People by Preempting the Field of Abortion Regulation.**

Recently, a spate of local ordinances have cropped up across the country seeking to institute an outright ban or to significantly restrict abortion access on the municipal level. This strategy, employed by organizations like “Sanctuary Cities for the Unborn” which was responsible for the local ordinance that eventually led to the Texas abortion ban, is not new.

You may remember that the Texas ordinance was designed to avoid legal challenges by giving private citizens the right to sue abortion providers rather than relying on government officials to enforce an abortion ban. This made it financially difficult for providers to keep operating because of the onslaught of suits from anti-abortion activists.

With the passage of Dobbs and the overturning of nearly 50-years of federal protection for the right to abortion, groups like this have become emboldened and are aggressively working to influence town and city councils across the country with similar measures. Communities in Colorado, Minnesota, New Mexico and Delaware have already seen these types of local ordinances introduced. In many instances, the town councils are voting the measures down, but not in all, and we don’t want to take that chance here.

LD 1343 would act as an assurance that politically-motivated, out-of-state interests can’t come to our state and undermine the very basic freedoms that all Mainers enjoy – a right to self-determination and bodily autonomy. To help guard against local abortion bans, the bill would

clarify that state law about abortion preempts local efforts to regulate or restrict abortion rights and access.

If municipalities were to start banning abortion, restricting distribution of medically necessary medications, making it more difficult for clinics to operate or any number of other tactics, it could significantly strain clinics that are already seeing a greater demand than they can meet for care.

Abortion care is health care and it is safe and legal in Maine. We cannot be in the business of making health care unsafe or making it harder to access. Mainers deserve better than that. When the stakes are so high, we owe it to our communities to shore up this most fundamental right and LD 1343 will do just that.