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The Honorable Anne Carney
The Honorable Matt Moonen
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

January 22, 2024

RE: Testimony in support for Sponsor's amendment for LD 780, "RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Protect Personal Reproductive Autonomy"

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Laura Harper, I live in Hallowell, and I'm here today on behalf of the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics or Maine AAP. We are a membership organization of 220 pediatricians and subspecialists who are dedicated to fulfilling the Chapter's mission: to improve the lives of children and adolescents in Maine.

We respectfully submit these comments in support for LD 780 as amended by Senator Vitelli's amendment. The Maine AAP has long supported unfettered access to the full range of sexual and reproductive healthcare for our adolescent patients, including abortion. In response to the supreme Court decision on *Dobbs v. Jackson's Women's Health Organization*, our national president had this to say:

This decision carries grave consequences for our adolescent patients, who already face many more barriers than adults in accessing comprehensive reproductive healthcare services and abortion care. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) ...reaffirm[s] our longstanding policy supporting adolescents' right to access comprehensive, evidence-based reproductive healthcare services, including abortion. [The] ruling means that in many places in the United States, this evidence-based care will be difficult or impossible to access, threatening the health and safety of our patients and jeopardizing the patient-physician relationship. In the wake of this ruling, the AAP will continue to support our chapters as states consider policies affecting access to abortion care, and pediatricians will continue to support our patients.

LD 780 is a critical confirmation of Maine's constitutional support for personal reproductive autonomy, including the right to an abortion. We urge the committee to support this bill and send it to the Maine voters so that the people may have the opportunity to affirm that Maine's constitution protects reproductive rights.

Thank you for considering our perspective. I'm happy to make myself available for the work session should you want further information or feedback from Maine AAP.

Sincerely,

Laura H. Harper
on behalf of Maine AAP