



Grandmothers For Reproductive Rights

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March 5th, 2024

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services:

My name is Cait Vaughan, and I am the interim Executive Director of Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights. GRR! builds the personal and collective power of grandmothers and elders to work—intergenerationally and through the lens of reproductive justice—to assure sexual and reproductive rights for present and future generations. With the strength of more than 500 elder-activists across the state, we urge you to vote in favor of **LD 227, *An Act Regarding Health Care in the State.***

We live in perilous times when millions of Americans cannot safely and legally access fundamental healthcare services where they live. For many older women, this is an all too familiar scenario. Before *Roe v. Wade* granted federal protections in 1973, many were forced to travel to places like New York or Washington, D.C. to receive legal abortions, at great financial and emotional cost. Still, they were privileged enough to be able to make the trip and survive. That is how bad things were and continue to be; travelers are the lucky ones, and so many others put their lives at risk or cannot ever fulfill their decisions. We once again have only patchwork access, combined with digital surveillance and the terrifying risks of criminalization. Our country is also experiencing the growth of a national movement wedding abortion stigma, vitriol towards transgender people, and disinformation about abortion and medical transition, in an effort to intimidate, control and criminalize people just trying to shape their lives on their own terms.

By passing LD 227, Maine could offer protection for those who can travel, so they can reach legitimate and compassionate care providers without fear of legal repercussions. By including protections for clinicians, Maine has a greater chance of forging and sustaining a healthcare workforce that highly trained professionals *want* to practice in, which is critical in our largely rural state. Perhaps most importantly, Maine's lawmakers have an opportunity to put the force of their values and votes behind bodily autonomy and equitable healthcare for women and transgender folks, here and across the entire United States. That's a privilege worth exercising. We urge you to vote Ought To Pass on LD 227.

Respectfully,

Cait Vaughan

Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights (GRR!) works, through education and advocacy, to secure access to sexual & reproductive health, rights & justice for present & future generations.