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Testimony in support:

LD 260, "RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law"

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

March 4, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Laura Harper, I'm a senior associate at Moose Ridge Associates and I live in Hallowell. I'm here today on behalf of my client, Maine Family Planning, to testify in support of LD 260, "RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law."

Maine Family Planning was founded in 1971. This was the year before The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that unmarried people have a right to contraception (*Eisenstadt v. Baird*, 1972). It was before the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974 guaranteed women the right to open a bank account or line of credit without a co-signer. And it was before Carol Moseley-Braun and Barbara Mikulski wore pants on the Senate floor in 1993, just thirty-two years ago, creating an uproar and changing the rules of decorum.

Today in 2025, the hard-won rights of women and minorities are under attack, and it is a critical time to consider how states can best protect these rights. LD 260 gives us a chance to enshrine equality protections in our State Constitution. For these reasons and so many more, we hope you will vote unanimously Ought to Pass and allow this important piece of legislation to continue moving forward to a vote in the House and Senate and ultimately a vote from the people of Maine.

Thank you.