

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, esteemed members of the committee, my name is Rebecca Mitchell, and I live in Gardiner. I am here today to urge you to support LD 143.

Planned Parenthood was my only source of medical care during my late teens and all through my 20's. Right out of high school I was on my own. I moved out of my childhood home, went to college and started living on my own. Planned Parenthood became my only source of medical care as I did not qualify for MaineCare, was not eligible for health care through work and could not afford healthcare out of pocket.

Planned Parenthood required regular Pap smears in order to receive birth control, so I stayed up to date. Had this not been available to me and a requirement I would not have known about my pre-cancerous cells in time to prevent cervical cancer. They provided me with the pap smear that found my abnormal results, the colposcopy that determined I need the LEEP (loop electro surgical excision procedure) and the referral I needed to get the LEEP. If not for this resource I strongly believe I would have, eventually, had full blown cervical cancer. This cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer, without Planned Parenthood I may not be here today.

If communities lose access to these services, so many people will not have the care they need and will potentially end up in life threatening situations.

I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 143 because the health of those, young and old, needs to be a priority. For some of us, a family planning clinic is our only option.

Thank you for your time.

Rebecca Mitchell