



MaineTransNet
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Committee on Health and Human Services

LD 143: An Act to Improve Women's Health and Economic Security by Funding Family Planning Services

March 10, 2025

Good morning Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the committee. My name is Bre Danvers-Kidman and I use they/them pronouns. I am here in my capacity as Executive Co-Director at MaineTransNet today to ask you to support LD 143.

Many Mainers face financial and logistical barriers to accessing healthcare, and these challenges are particularly acute in more rural areas of the state. Due to their longstanding efforts to care for those who fall through the cracks of our healthcare system, family planning providers are often the first and only medical provider patients see in a year. These providers represent the only places many transgender Mainers can trust they will be able to safely access healthcare in an increasingly uncertain political landscape. LD 143, An Act to Improve Women's Health and Economic Security by Funding Family Planning Services, will help safeguard Maine's family planning network so that the most vulnerable people in our state can access the essential healthcare they need.

The family planning care network is a critical part of our state's public health infrastructure. This care network provides primary and/or reproductive health care services for more than 31,000 patients annually, over 2/3 of whom qualified for free or reduced cost care in 2023. The care provided includes birth control, cancer screenings, routine gynecological exams and care, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, and gender-affirming care, as well as behavioral health services, vaccinations, nutrition support, and well person care.

Maine's family planning care network consists of 19 Maine Family Planning health centers, 4 Planned Parenthood health centers, 32 Federally-Qualified Health Centers, and 8 School-based health centers. These providers offer millions of dollars in free and reduced-cost care each year, but for the last decade state funding has remained fixed at a flat rate representing a fraction of the actual cost. Meanwhile, all of these providers continue to navigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, increasing costs of delivering care, growing demand for free and reduced care, insufficient and stagnant reimbursement rates, and ongoing political attacks.

The Trump administration's executive actions and ongoing threats to withhold federal funding could rapidly destabilize Maine's health care infrastructure, jeopardizing services for our most vulnerable neighbors. The U.S. House has set its sights on cuts to Medicaid. Because many patients in Maine's family planning network rely on Medicaid, cuts to coverage could be devastating to the family planning network and create increased demand for free and reduced cost services. LD 143 would provide just over \$6 million to support Maine's critical family planning care network, ensuring that services can continue for those who need them most.

Birth control, gender-affirming care, and IVF have been targets of courts and state legislatures throughout the country, including here in Maine during this current legislative session. But the simple math here doesn't lie: every \$1 invested in family planning saves \$4.83 by preventing unintended pregnancies, reproductive cancers, and sexually transmitted infections. Maine's overburdened healthcare infrastructure truly cannot afford not to pass LD 143, and ensure that Maine's vital family planning providers across the state can keep their doors open.

For these reasons, I ask for your strong support today.