



Committee on Health and Human Services

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

March 10, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Gia Drew, and I am the Executive Director of EqualityMaine, which has been advocating on behalf of Maine's LGBTQ+ community since 1984. We urge you to support LD 143 in order to ensure that adequate funding is available for the providers that patients around the state rely on for their care.

Of the over 30,000 patients who receive services each year through more than 60 healthcare sites statewide, 70% qualify for free or reduced cost care.¹ Many of these sites are rural, and often, the family planning clinicians are the only medical providers patients see in a year. Thousands of LGBTQ+ Mainers rely on family planning providers for many types of healthcare including but not limited to: primary care, pregnancy services, cancer screenings, mental and behavioral services, screenings for diabetes, sexually transmitted infections testing and treatment, and gender affirming care. It's also important to note that family planning providers connect patients with essential social services and agencies that cover other basic needs like food and housing. Meanwhile, these providers are also contending with the increasing costs of delivering care, growing demand for free and reduced care, insufficient reimbursement rates, and ongoing political attacks.

¹ "For Media: Maine Family Planning: Healthcare Services." Maine Family Planning, 18 Sept. 2024, mainefamilyplanning.org/get-involved/for-media/.

Additionally, Maine is experiencing an active HIV cluster and skyrocketing rates of sexually transmitted infections.²

The case for public funding of family planning services is clear: the availability of services substantially improves the educational, economic, and overall well-being of recipients, their families, and society as a whole, and yields cost savings for the public healthcare system.³ We ask you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 143 in order to ensure that everyone has access to essential healthcare. As health providers are serving more patients than ever without sufficient support, there has never been a more critical time to invest in Maine’s family planning network.

Thank you,

Gia Drew (she/her)
Executive Director, EqualityMaine

² “Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention.” Health Alert Network System (HAN) | MeCDC | Maine DHHS, www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/newhan.shtml.

³ www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/bb400414-8dee-4e39-abd3-c2460fd30e7d/the-economic-benefits-of-birth-control-and-access-to-family-planning.pdf.