

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing on Judiciary, my name is Janice Wright, and I live in Bath. Family planning services have been vital to my family for many years. I am 77 yrs old. I remember the time when access to reproductive information was practically non-existent. I was a college student when the first clinic opened in my area. To be able to ask questions and get birth control in a non-judgmental, professional, affordable environment was life changing.

Access to reproductive care for me and my daughters was so important. We were without medical insurance and Planned Parenthood was critical to our reproductive care. When I became a high school teacher in my 40's I would often encourage students to go to Planned Parenthood. I never had a Ob-gyn except when I was pregnant. All other female care was provided for me by Planned Parenthood. From yeast infections to managing symptoms of menopause.

We need the state legislature to fund LD 143 because we are all human beings who need access to reproductive healthcare. We live in a state with a large low-income population. The network of family planning providers in Maine has a vital role in keeping people healthy. Without these services, Mainers will lose access to critical care including pregnancy prevention, cancer screenings, and testing & treatment for sexually transmitted infections. Our state is already seeing high rates of sexually transmitted infections. Our communities cannot afford to lose any more access to medical care. The return on the dollars we spend on family planning services will be returned a hundred-fold. I urge you to go and visit a family planning clinic-- get a tour. You cannot help but be impressed.

Please vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 143, to ensure that all Mainers can continue accessing these vital health services.