



PO BOX 135 Woolwich, ME 04579
207-802-0667
mainenpassociation@gmail.com

25+ Years of Independent Practice as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine

February 12, 2025

Testimony in support of LD 143: An Act to improve Women's Health and Economic Security by Funding Family Planning Services.

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, & members of the Committee on Health & Human Services,

My name is Kathleen Forti-Gallant and I live in Stetson, work in Bangor and am writing on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association (MNPA), as well as a citizen and health care provider in Maine. We urge you to support funding to maintain family planning services to provide access to these desperately needed services in our state.

Family planning is not just birth control and avoiding unwanted pregnancies, it is a source for many primary care services, disease detection/treatment, wellness examinations, prevention, cancer detection, counseling, etc. Family planning services reduce risks for mothers & children and are provided at a lower cost than emergency rooms or some other facilities, etc. Family Planning Centers in Maine provided reduced cost and free care to over 31,000 people in 2023, who already face barriers to care. The Family Planning Centers provide quality care and necessary services for women, children, & men at multiple sites around the state. Family planning centers have also been victim to flat funding, Covid-19, increased costs, poor reimbursement rates, political attacks, and increasing numbers of patients who cannot pay.

There is a healthcare provider shortage in Maine & in a rural state such as ours, access to timely quality care is an issue. Family planning centers provide necessary services that are not available elsewhere. I send patients for care to family planning centers around the state at least once a week as they are not able to get the care that they need anywhere as other offices are closing or remote or do not have fee scale. Barriers to reproductive care have increased for low income families & CDC Healthy People 2030 targets included increasing family planning services. A 2024 informational bulletin by the Deputy Administrator & Director of the Center for Medicaid & CHIP services wrote that 'CMS is committed to ensuring that all Medicaid beneficiaries have access to & coverage of family planning services.' This bill does not fund abortion.

MNPA urges your support of LD 143 to fund/grant/maintain the necessary access to family planning services. Thank-you for your time & consideration. Please feel free to call us with questions # 802-0667.

Kathleen Forti-Gallant

Family Nurse Practitioner

MNPA legislative committee

mainenpassociation@gmail.com

Tel #207-852-8403