



Senator Bailey, Representative Gramlich, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Lisa Margulies, I serve as Vice President of Public Affairs, Maine, for Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and I am here today to submit testimony in support of LD 538.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England provides comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care in approximately 10,000 visits per year in Maine at four health centers located in Biddeford, Portland, Sanford, and Topsham, as well as online via telehealth. People turn to us for affordable, high-quality care including wellness exams, birth control, disease testing and treatment, cancer screenings, gender-affirming care, abortion care, as well as a variety of primary care services.

As a mission driven health care provider, we fundamentally believe everyone should be able to access affordable, high quality sexual and reproductive health care in their communities, no matter where they live or how much money they make, and we advocate for policies that help make this vision a reality. All people deserve to access comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion and gender-affirming care, free from shame, stigma, and intimidation. We see everyone who comes to us regardless of ability to pay, and in a typical year, we provide more than \$1.2 million in free and discounted care to our communities in Maine. For many, we are their only access to the health care system.

When the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, it removed federal protections for abortion access and put hundreds of millions of Americans' abilities to access the health care of their choice at the whims of politicians in their respective states. Since that decision, abortion access in the United States has devolved into a chaotic and often confusing labyrinth where one's ability to access health care is determined by their address and state legislature. In this tumultuous landscape, Maine has remained a safe harbor for those seeking access to vitally needed sexual and reproductive health care. While more than a dozen states have banned abortion outright in the wake of *Dobbs*, we are grateful that Maine lawmakers have acted to protect, preserve, and expand access to abortion in our state.

Last year, the 131st Legislature reaffirmed our state's commitment to essential health care by passing a comprehensive shield law to protect providers of legal reproductive and transgender care from threats of hostile actions by out-of-state actors attempting to impose restrictive laws from their states in Maine. LD 538 is an



additional level of protection for health care clinicians who may be a target of hostile actions despite providing legal—and life-saving—medical care here in Maine.

LD 538 would protect the privacy and safety of Maine clinicians by allowing them to choose to have their name removed from prescription labels for mifepristone, misoprostol, and their generic equivalents. This would deter abortion opponents from out of state from weaponizing a discarded or otherwise obtained pill bottle.

In providing additional safeguards for the practitioners of safe and legal reproductive health care, the bill reaffirms Maine's commitment to defending our clinicians, and, through those protections, our commitment to ensuring all Mainers can access this critical care. It also protects our state's fragile health care infrastructure, particularly important given Maine's clinician shortage—especially in rural areas where the loss of even a single clinician could have a devastating impact on patients' ability to access care.

It's important to note that despite mis- and dis-information spread by opponents, these medications are safe, effective, and have important medical uses beyond abortion, including miscarriage management.

LD 538 would protect clinicians providing essential reproductive care and reaffirm our state's commitment to them and the patients they serve. I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 538. Thank you for all your efforts to protect essential health care in Maine.