



March 19, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage Insurance and Financial Services,

I join you today on behalf of the Maine Women's Lobby. For over forty years, the Maine Women's Lobby has worked to build gender justice in Maine through legislative advocacy and systems change.

We are here today in support of **LD 538 "An Act to Amend Maine's Prescription Drug Labeling Law by Allowing the Removal of the Name of a Prescriber of Mifepristone, Misoprostol and Their Generic Alternatives"**, and thank Representative Clutchey for sponsoring this important bill.

Abortion access and reproductive health care serves public health, the well-being of families, and is the cornerstone of gender equity. Since the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision eliminated federal abortion protections, 14 states have passed near total bans and it is expected that at least half of all states are at risk for bans.¹ These bans remove the ability for people to make decisions regarding their own medical care. Basic rights, including reproductive autonomy, should not be subject to the uncertainty of political decisions, in Maine or elsewhere.

Last year, Maine lawmakers passed LD 227, colloquially called "The Shield Law," seeing the critical need to protect Maine healthcare providers from the real threat of hostile out-of-state litigation and investigations for providing care that is fully legal in Maine. **LD 538 is an effort in the same vein: protecting Maine healthcare providers from hostile interference and intimidation so they can continue to practice in peace and with safety.**

Maine already suffers from a provider shortage. If we cannot provide protection against hostile litigation, this provider shortage will worsen as providers choose to practice in safer areas—several states have already implemented this protection with others currently considering it. Protecting vulnerable health care providers is critical to ensuring that all Mainers have access to accepted standards of medical care. LD 538 codifies

¹ New York Times. (Updated April 28, 2023). Tracking the States Where Abortion Is Now Banned. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/us/abortion-laws-roe-v-wade.html> . See also Center for Reproductive Rights, interactive map, at: <https://reproductiverights.org/maps/abortion-laws-by-state/>

critical protections to ensure that all providers feel safe continuing to provide care in our state.

We must take every step possible to clarify that access to all essential medical care is legally protected in Maine.

We hope you will vote Ought to Pass.

Sincerely,

Destie Hohman Sprague
Maine Women's Lobby