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Opposing Testimony
LDs 253, 682, 886, 887, 975, 1007, and 1154

My name is Aspen Ruhlin, and I am speaking today in my role as the Community Engagement Manager at Mabel Wadsworth Center. First, I would like to thank the Chairs Senator Carney and Representative Kuhn, along with the rest of the Judiciary Committee. Mabel Wadsworth Center is an independent feminist sexual and reproductive health center that has been providing care in Bangor since 1984. Our services include abortion care, prenatal care, STI testing/treatment, contraception, primary care, and more. Our center is committed to the autonomy, health, and wellbeing of every patient who walks through our doors, and for this reason we ask you to vote “ought not to pass” on LDs 253, 682, 886, 887, 975, 1007, and 1154 today.

As time is limited, I will keep this brief and say that every single one of these bills has been presented in bad faith. It is the solemn duty of the Maine Legislature to improve the wellbeing of Mainers, and every single one of these bills seeks to do the opposite. We know that abortion access improves the physical and mental health of those who can get pregnant¹. We know that medication abortion is safe, whether obtained in a clinic, via telehealth, or online². In fact, we know that medication abortion is safer than Tylenol³⁴. We know that abortion reversal is not only not possible, but that the claim from anti-abortion extremists that progesterone can be used to reverse the effects of mifepristone before a patient takes misoprostol may cause hemorrhaging⁵.

Abortions are normal, needed care. The circumstances for every person seeking this care is different, and it simply does not work to try to legislate each unique circumstance for abortion or any other example of healthcare. We trust that pregnant people know what they need. We trust trained providers to provide quality care. The exam room is no place for a politician to insert themselves. As a clinic well-acquainted with the varied needs of pregnant people, including their need for autonomy and dignity, Mabel Wadsworth Center urges you to vote “ought not to pass” on this slew of bills.

¹ <https://www.ansirh.org/research/ongoing/turnaway-study>
² [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X\(22\)00017-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X(22)00017-5/fulltext)
³ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5696016/>
⁴ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/03/15/health/abortion-pill-safety-dg/index.html>
⁵ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31809439/>