

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Sara Gagné-Holmes
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
11 State House Station
109 Capitol Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel: (207) 287-3707; Fax: (207) 287-3005
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Testimony of the Commissioner's Office
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

In opposition to LD 253, *An Act to Prevent the MaineCare Program from Covering Abortion Services*

Sponsor: Representative Javner
Hearing Date: March 28, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Abby Stivers, and I serve as the Director of Government Relations for the Maine Department of Health and Human Services.

The Department of Health and Human Services strongly opposes LD 253, *An Act to Prevent the MaineCare Program from Covering Abortion*, as this bill would reverse the current public policy that ensures equitable access to abortion care for Maine people, something the Department strongly supported when the Legislature considered and enacted LD 820 in the 129th Legislature.

Access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care is integral to a person's physical, mental, and economic well-being. We believe that every person in Maine has the right to make their own personal medical decisions and access sexual and reproductive health care when and where they need it, without undue barriers to services, including, but not limited to, whether their insurance will cover the cost of their health care or not.

Prior to the passage of LD 820, we had a system that meant those who were Medicaid eligible or whose private insurance did not offer full coverage, were denied access to care that those with broader, more comprehensive coverage were not. In other words, if the current public policy were to be reversed, we would go back to restricting those with lower incomes from accessing the same healthcare that is available to those with higher incomes.

The Department does not support this approach to health care, and we do not support creating barriers to accessing abortion by imposing selective insurance coverage for a safe and legal health care procedure. We urge the committee to join the Department's opposition and vote against LD 253.

Thank you for your time and attention.