



Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, 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 opposition to LDs 406, 539, 952, 1169, 1221, 1249, 1273, 1307, 1333, 1400, and 1712.

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, behavioral health care, abortion care, gender-affirming 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.

As a health care provider and an employer, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England unequivocally supports the Paid Family Medical Leave program. This program has the potential to improve the health and well-being of our patients, employees, and all Mainers throughout their entire lives.

As designed, the Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) program will allow our state's workforce the flexibility to support themselves, their families, and their loved ones through life's unexpected challenges. Research shows that parental leave improves the mental and physical health of parents and better health for their children: decreases in low birth weight, increased immunization rates, and improved feeding practices.ⁱ At the same time, PFML is associated with improved economic outcomes for parents, especially those from vulnerable groups, and minimal impacts on employers.ⁱⁱ



What does this look like in practice? For new parents or those looking to become parents, it means time to bond with infants through the intense and often rocky first few months of their lives. For parents or caregivers of young children, it means time to care for them as they cycle through childhood illnesses and injuries, like chicken pox or a broken limb, or more serious conditions that no child or parent should ever have to face, like cancer. For victims of domestic and sexual violence, it means time to leave dangerous situations and seek support and shelter. For older Mainers as well as their caregivers—especially important to consider given Maine’s demographics—it means time for medical care and supports at the end of life. For all working Mainers, it means time to heal from injury and illness, time for recovery and rehabilitation, which can make a crucial difference in rejoining the workforce or being permanently unable to do so.

This program provides security and peace of mind to working Mainers and their families, who can take the time they and their loved ones need to rest and recover should sickness or injury befall them. For these reasons, we were proud to advocate for the passage of the legislation establishing Maine’s PFML program and wholeheartedly support it today. We would ask the committee to oppose any efforts seeking to repeal, hinder, or delay the programs and vote “ought not to pass” on all the bills before you today.

ⁱ Virginia Employment Commission, *Virginia Paid Family and Medical Leave Study 2024 Update*, November 2024, <https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2025/RD31#:~:text=Enhanced%20Health%20Outcomes%20for%20Families,pa rental%20mental%20and%20physical%20health>.

ⁱⁱ Id.