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Testimony in support:

LD 1687, "An Act to Clarify and Increase Access to HIV Prevention Medications"

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services

April 29, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Laura Harper. I'm a senior associate at Moose Ridge Associates and I live in Hallowell. I am here today on behalf of my client, Maine Family Planning (MFP) to speak in support of LD 1687, "An Act to Clarify and Increase Access to HIV Prevention Medications."

MFP provides comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care to teens and adults at 19 locations statewide. Our mission is to ensure that all people have access to high-quality, culturally relevant and affordable sexual and reproductive health care services, comprehensive sexual health education, and the right to control their sexual and reproductive lives. This includes access to HIV pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, commonly referred to as PrEP and PEP.

PrEP and PEP are both safe and highly effective medications that can lower a person's chances of contracting HIV. Allowing pharmacists to prescribe and provide these vital medications along with requiring MaineCare coverage means that more people will have access to these drugs. HIV prevention is an essential tool not just for the health of an individual, but for the health of our entire state.

This bill comes before you at a critical time for Maine. With an active HIV cluster in Penobscot County, it's imperative that access to HIV prevention medications be as accessible as possible. MFP has been leading the efforts in HIV testing in Penobscot County, along with the HIV testing & prevention offered at all of our health centers statewide.

In 2021, Maine helped lead a nationwide effort as just the third state to pass legislation that enabled people to access PrEP and PEP directly from a pharmacist. With protocols now officially adopted by the Maine Board of Pharmacy, it's time to act again to ensure the most effective implementation.

In closing, we ask you to please vote LD 1687, "ought to pass." Thank you for your attention and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.