



Post Office Box 587
Augusta, ME 04332-0587
t: 207.622.7524
f: 207.622.0836

**Testimony of George Hill for
Maine Family Planning**

In support of

LD 335, An Act to Protect Funding for Family Planning Services

February 25, 2026

Good morning, Senator Ingwerson, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is George Hill, and I am president and CEO of Maine Family Planning. I'm here to support LD 335, "An Act to Protect Funding for Family Planning Services."

I've served as Maine Family Planning's (MFP) lead staff person for 35 years, working with federal administrations both friendly and hostile to the needs of our patients and the staff who serve them. It is an understatement to say that the attacks on our statewide family planning network over the last 13 months have never been so vindictive, nor so relentless, and they show no signs of letting up.

In many of the state's most rural areas, reproductive health care is facing enormous strain. Our severe shortage of family planning and reproductive health care providers has been exacerbated by several hospitals closing their labor and delivery units. This has led OBGYNs to leave those areas where the health care system is already overstrained. And although we are exploring possible partnerships with Nurse Midwives and doulas, these closures will inevitably have a ripple effect across the state.... Patients will suffer.

Maine's family planning network is the state's backbone of reproductive health care. In total, sexual, and reproductive health care is provided in 19 Maine Family Planning sites, including a mobile medical unit; 4 Planned Parenthood of Northern New England health centers; 32 Federally Qualified Health Centers; and 8 school-based health centers. We collectively serve roughly 30,000 patients each year.

Eight of the counties where MFP operates are 80 percent rural. Eleven of the state's 16 counties are more than 50 percent rural. That means many patients live far from Maine's cities and find it difficult to access health care providers on any given day.

To make matters worse, last summer, President Trump and his allies in Congress passed H.R. 1, a budget reconciliation bill, which excluded MFP and PPNNE from participating in Medicaid since last July for the simple reason that both organizations provide abortion care. The budget law threatens the future of MFP's rural clinics, as half of our patients rely on Medicaid. While we haven't had to close any clinics yet, the cuts made it financially impossible to continue operating primary care services in Houlton, Ellsworth, and Presque Isle. While we continue to offer the full range of sexual and reproductive health care regardless of ability to pay, ending primary care in those three clinics last October affected nearly 1,000 primary care patients, all of them living in federally designated Medically Underserved Areas.

In 2025, Maine's legislature approved one-time funding for Maine's family planning network. On behalf of the 30,000 patients served by Maine's network of providers, we thank you. It proved to be essential in stabilizing the network's health care operations. But with the Affordable Care Act insurance subsidies just expiring, and Mainers facing increasing financial pressures generally, and many as

people are going without insurance, and we expect many will turn to MFP clinics for care.

And while we continue to serve Medicaid-insured patients and provide free or reduced services at no cost to them, that's unsustainable. At some point, without the ongoing funding called for in LD335, it is estimated that between 34,000-50,000 Mainers will be forced off Medicaid.

Simply put: Our patients need federal funding to be replaced by state funding on an ongoing basis to prevent clinic closures and layoffs. A more robust state partnership in funding essential health care has been needed for decades. By entering into such a partnership, the Legislature can protect critical access to the wide range of services the state's family planning network provides to 30,000 Mainers each year.

We encourage you to seize this opportunity as a wise and durable investment in Maine's public health.

Thank you for your attention and I'd be happy to take any questions you may have.