



126 Sewall Street  
Augusta, Maine 04330-6822  
TTY/Voice: (207) 632-9438  
www.mainequaljustice.org

# Maine Equal Justice

## People Policy Solutions

**Alex Carter**  
Senior Policy Advocate  
acarter@mejp.org

### **Testimony in Support of LD 335, An Act to Safeguard Reproductive Rights**

**February 25, 2026**

Good afternoon Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Alex Carter (she/her) and I am a Senior Policy Advocate at Maine Equal Justice (MEJ), a nonprofit civil legal aid provider working to increase economic security, opportunity, and equity for people in Maine. Through direct legal services and systemic advocacy, we represent the interests of people with low income across our state.

Maine's family planning network consists of 63 health centers statewide and provides care to anyone who needs it, regardless of their ability to pay or their insurance status. For many Mainers with low income, reproductive health centers are essential points of access to primary and sexual and reproductive health services and often the only point of contact someone will have with our health care system in a year. They are trusted sources of knowledge, confidential counseling, and sensitive health care and many times the closest and most flexible option for people who face financial and logistical barriers to access. Maine's reproductive health centers are the definition of safety net providers.

The majority of their patients (69%) live at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) or make under \$40,000 annually.<sup>1</sup> Financing of care for people with low income has traditionally come from a variety of public and private sources, including Medicaid, and the federal Title X Family Planning Program. Nearly half of Maine Family Planning's (MFP) patients are currently insured through Medicaid, while 22% lack insurance all together. At Planned Parenthood of Northern New England's (PPNNE) health centers, 24% of patients use Medicaid, 68% qualify for Title X services, and 58% are considered low income. However, due to unprecedented federal attacks on reproductive rights and health care funding, family planning providers, across the country and state, face an existential threat.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/b1bfa16b20ae9b89d525bc35de7c1643/detailed-guidelines-2026.pdf>

In July 2025, Congress passed H.R.1 and some of the most sweeping changes to Medicaid in the history of the program. This included new work reporting requirements, further restrictions on immigrant eligibility, and a one-year prohibition on federal Medicaid reimbursements for providers who offer abortion care. Despite, existing restrictions on the use of Medicaid funds for abortion services, the bill also restricted providers from being reimbursed for non-abortion services including primary care, birth control, and cancer screenings. This means half of MFP's patients and nearly a quarter of PPNNE's patients cannot use their insurance at their preferred provider. It also means our family planning clinics are providing exponentially more uncompensated care at an unsustainable level.

The impacts of H.R.1 in Maine have been swift. Maine Family Planning has already stopped providing primary care in Houlton, Ellsworth, and Presque Isle, removing yet another option for preventive and primary services in an already fraying rural health system. Without state support, we will see more cuts to services, more clinic closures, and more Maine people going without necessary care. Those impacts will fall hardest on people who are already most marginalized by our health care system—people with low income, young people, trans people, immigrants, and people in rural and underserved parts of our state.

LD 335 seeks to both offset the losses from H.R.1 and put protections in place to safeguard against possible future attacks on Medicaid and Title X funding. We also support the \$2.25 million appropriation in Part A of Governor's supplemental budget to fill the gaps left by H.R.1 for family planning providers and we encourage you to support it as well. Ensuring the sustainability of our family planning network supports the health and wellbeing of all Mainers.

Please support LD 335 to protect vital access to health care for people with low income.

Thank you,

**Alex Carter**

*she/her/hers*

Senior Policy Advocate

Maine Equal Justice

126 Sewall St., Augusta, ME 04330

[maineequaljustice.org](http://maineequaljustice.org)