

Testimony in support:
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 Melissa Gray, and I am Clinical Services Director at Maine Family Planning (MFP). I'm here to support LD 335, "An Act to Protect Funding for Family Planning Services."

Our largely rural environment is a real stressor in Maine. Maine Family Planning and the state's sexual and reproductive health care network of 63 sites, have long played a key role in alleviating barriers to health care access.

In July 2025, Trump and his allies in Congress passed a budget bill, H.R. 1, that prohibits reproductive care providers like us, who offer abortion care, from being reimbursed with federal Medicaid funding. That includes funding for non-abortion services. We have relied every year on \$2 million in federal Medicaid funds to serve patients with low incomes who see us as their trusted health provider. Those funds represent 20 percent of our overall budget. Half of our patients are on Medicaid, known as MaineCare.

This sudden funding cut was a direct attack on our most vulnerable Mainers. We had to make an extremely difficult decision to slim down some of our services, ending our primary care services in Holton, Presque Isle and Ellsworth, effective October 31 last year.

Patients were upset, confused, and disappointed. Discharging and turning away vulnerable patients strikes at the very heart of MFP's reputation as a trusted community provider. Those in our rural communities have very few care options. Even patients who may be able to access alternative care face significant delays, further travel distances, longer wait times, and higher costs in Maine's already overstretched health care system.

At Maine Family Planning, we provide essential health care to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. We are often patients' last resort for care. It is deeply troubling to think about where our patients will go if we can't continue to serve them.

Having healthy communities is our number one priority. Everyone deserves the ability to control their reproductive future and access routine care from providers they know and trust.

These Medicaid cuts are having a broad impact on the entire health care ecosystem in our state. Clinics and rural hospitals are closing, along with their labor and delivery units. This is straining the rest of the system and leading OB/GYNs to flee the area.

We are doing everything we can to shield patients from these cruel impacts, including continuing to provide care to MaineCare patients without reimbursement. But this situation is untenable in the longer term.

We need consistent annual state funding to prevent more clinic closures and layoffs. We urge the Maine state legislature to protect this vital care that all Mainers deserve, regardless of how much money they make or where they live. Thank you.