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Buxton

Testimony in Support: LD 335, An Act to Safeguard Reproductive Rights

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Committee on Health and Human Services, I am writing today in support of LD 335, "An Act to Safeguard Reproductive Rights".

Rural consumers rely on Maine Family Planning not only for reproductive health, but also for larger health care concerns. In addition to the physical health services, family planning organizations are trained to identify possible domestic violence and sexual coercion, providing a first-line response and coordination with domestic/sexual violence resource centers. My work as a domestic violence advocate in Maine has demonstrated over and over again how important this is to protect survivors. They also provide first line response to mental health issues, mitigating sexual health related mental health concerns along with the DV early intervention. Providing services for LGBTQ and trans Mainers is also crucial in this changing environment. These vital services will not be replaced by existing over-extended clinics or private providers who do not have the expertise.

We have a system of clinics that have demonstrated how well they work and that fill a crucial part of the larger health network, which is not duplicated elsewhere. Please support their ongoing functioning.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 335.