



***Testimony in support of LD 1503***

**[An Act To Stop Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Pollution](#)**

Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker and members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Nicole Clegg and I serve as the Senior Vice President of Public Affairs at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England and am pleased to submit testimony in support of LD 1503.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England provides comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care to more than 14,000 people in Maine at four health centers located in Biddeford, Portland, Sanford and Topsham. People turn to us for affordable, high-quality care including wellness exams, birth control, disease testing and treatment, cancer screenings, abortion care as well as a variety of primary care services. We see everyone who comes to us regardless of ability to pay, and in a typical year, we provide more than \$4 million in free and discounted care to our communities in Maine.

As a mission driven health care provider, we fundamentally believe everyone should be able to get affordable, high quality sexual and reproductive health care in their communities, no matter where they live or how much money they make and we advocate for policies that help make this vision a reality.

In recent decades, scientists have become increasingly concerned about the growing presence of so-called “forever chemicals”, Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl substances or PFAS, in America’s water supply<sup>1</sup>. So-dubbed because the chemicals may take hundreds or even thousands of years to break up through natural processes, PFAS’s pose significant risk to Mainers’ reproductive and developmental health, disproportionately impacting individuals who may become pregnant and the very young.

Beyond the potential impacts of exposure, which include: pregnancy-induced hypertension and preeclampsia; reduced birthweight; reduced fetal growth; and an increased risk for thyroid disease in children; PFAS are nearly ubiquitous, found in thousands of everyday products from food packaging to the rugs in our homes to the

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<sup>1</sup> Annie Sneed, *Scientific American*, “Forever Chemicals Are Widespread in U.S. Drinking Water”, (2021), <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/forever-chemicals-are-widespread-in-u-s-drinking-water/>

pans that we cook on in.<sup>2</sup> While PFAS may still be needed in some health and safety applications for most use safer alternatives exist<sup>3</sup>. We strongly support LD 1503's efforts to restrict PFAS usage to areas where such chemicals are still needed and to expand education of the public about the dangers posed by exposure.

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<sup>2</sup> Aolin Wang, Amy Padula, Marina Sirota, & Tracey J. Woodruff, *Fertility and Sterility*, "ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES: PREGNANCY, PLACENTA, AND MISCARRIAGE" (2016), [https://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282\(16\)62506-2/fulltext](https://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282(16)62506-2/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup> Cheryl Hogue, *Chemical & Engineering News*, "How to say goodbye to PFAS", (2019), <https://cen.acs.org/environment/persistent-pollutants/say-goodbye-PFAS/97/i46>