

May 3, 2021

Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and members of the HCIFS Committee,

I encourage you, and know many of your constituents would support and encourage you to vote, "ought to pass" for LD 1539, An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care.

Access to fertility care is so important in many ways. The lack thereof has caused severe financial burden and emotional distress in just determining our ability to conceive safely, and now our need for IVF to grow our family. For us, we were able to have our first child successfully. When we tried to welcome a sibling, we suffered an ectopic pregnancy, in the middle of the pandemic, with severe internal bleeding and subsequent loss of our pregnancy. We chose to have a procedure done to assess the quality of the remaining fallopian tube to avoid putting my life at risk again, but because the procedure is considered fertility care, this was not covered by our insurance.

After hearing our results, we are only able to conceive via IVF. Currently I work with physicians at a large-scale healthcare organization, but we do not have access to affordable fertility care. My husband is self-employed, and I carry our family on my insurance plan. Recently, we have discussed two options: leaving my career behind, and finding a job in New Hampshire that I could commute to; or my husband giving up his dreams of owning his own business and doing the same. Sadly, this is happening more and more as Maine is not providing the support that aspiring families need to remain here.

For many of us showing our support, the family we desire isn't an option due to the financial constraints of fertility care in Maine. It is unfortunate that simple diagnostic procedures are not even covered because they are considered fertility care. It is unfortunate that Maine families do not have access to fertility treatments to further grow Maine's younger population. I grew up in Maine, left Maine but returned to raise my family here. Unfortunately, this may no longer be an option for me. Thank you for hearing and considering my strong stance on this bill.

Sincerely,

Hannah Johnson