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Portland

As hopeful parents-to-be, we eagerly encourage you to support LD1539. This is of particular significance to queer couples like us who have fewer options, and less affordable options, for building a family. We would also strongly encourage you to include less common practices like reciprocal IVF, which is sometimes the best option for families. Fertility treatments are an unavoidable part of our path to pregnancy. Each round of treatment can cost up to \$12,000, and though we are both insured, very little will be covered. It's a daunting amount to spend, and will likely cause us to go into debt and postpone other investments, like buying a house. We've even considered moving to a state that does require insurance to cover treatment. And we are in the fortunate group that has a stable income to rely on. If not for the astronomical cost, we might have become parents years ago.

It has been in the news all week that the US birth rate is declining. Maine's birth rate has been below replacement level for years. It's painfully ironic to hear worried pundits discuss the economic and social costs of an aging population, while there is a group of people who want to have children, and can't.

This bill could allow individuals and couples to become parents when it is best for them and their health, rather than have to save up money and delay pregnancy and risk health impacts and life events that will only make the journey longer and more difficult.

Thank you for your support, and we urge you to vote Ought-to-Pass.

- Meagan L Lauer & Anna Kellar, Portland Maine