

May 5, 2021

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

Re: LD 1539, An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care

Dear Senator Heather Sanborn, Representative Denise Tepler, and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

I respectfully urge you to support LD 1539, "An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care" and to report the bill for a cost study. I am a reproductive endocrinology and infertility specialist who has been providing fertility care out of our South Portland practice for the past 10 years. In that time, we have helped Maine families achieve over 1500 babies. These are children that go on to enter Maine schools, play youth sports, and enrich the communities in which they live. Their pictures cover a wall in our office every year as we receive birth announcements and holiday cards from our many happy families.

As you know and will hear today, many people in Maine struggle to start a family. Currently, most of them do not have insurance coverage for fertility care. Some are able to access care but many are unable to afford the services they need. As a result, many people will delay seeking care, choose ineffective alternatives, or not access treatment at all. Some seek employment or residence in neighboring states with more progressive insurance regulations in order to receive appropriate care. With an ever-growing population of people or retirement age in the state, Maine needs to encourage young families to stay and grow in the state.

The fertility care we are talking about today is well proven and safe medical technology that has been developed over the past 40 years. The proposed legislative document includes coverage for testing to make an adequate diagnosis, as well as a range of treatments of varying complexity and cost. Many of our patients require relatively simple procedures to assist with conception. A smaller percentage will require more complex and expensive options such as IVF. By approving this legislation, a man with a low sperm count after an injury; a couple that has tried to conceive for years without success or explanation; a woman with breast cancer about to lose her eggs to chemotherapy; and the many other people that need our help to start their families, can all access the fertility care they need.

To conclude, LD 1539 will improve access to fertility care, which will help strengthen Maine families and provide much needed care for those struggling with this heartbreaking issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this important issue and support this act to provide access to fertility care for the many citizens of Maine who rely on fertility treatments to grow their families. As one of the few fertility specialists in the state, I am happy to advise or help in any way needed.

Sincerely,
Benjamin M. Lannon, MD