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Testimony of Rep. Colleen Madigan Introducing LD 1539, “An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care” May 5, 2021

Good morning Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and members of the Committee On Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. I am Representative Colleen Madigan, and I represent part of Oakland and part of Waterville. I am here today to introduce LD 1539, “An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care.”

This legislation is designed to provide comprehensive insurance coverage for fertility diagnostic care and treatment, as well as for medically necessary fertility preservation. Currently the majority of Mainers do not have access to fertility coverage. This leaves many individuals and couples having to pay for out-of-pocket fertility care. Many can't afford to even try to achieve their dream of parenthood because treatment can cost thousands of dollars, and even tens of thousands of dollars.

Unfortunately I can relate. I have infertility. When it was possible for me to have treatment to attempt to address this and have a child, my health insurance did not cover fertility treatment. And I didn't have the money to pay for it. I paid a lot of money for health insurance through my employer and when I needed it, it was not available. The desire to have a child is a basic part of human life. This bill will not help me personally. It is too late to help me now. But I don't want anyone to experience the heavy grief that comes with infertility if they don't have to.

Becoming a parent is one of the most fundamental human aspirations. So, it is very emotionally and physically challenging to deal with fertility struggles. This stress can be magnified by the financial worries caused by a lack of insurance coverage. These people are paying for private health insurance so that it will be there for them when they need it most, but in this case, it is not.

The lack of widespread fertility coverage in Maine not only negatively impacts the patients that need this vital care but also negatively impacts our state economically. Maine and Vermont are the only New England states that do not have a fertility insurance law. Passing this bill will help us to be competitive with our neighboring states as it relates to attracting and retaining a young workforce.

Thank you very much. I look forward to working with you on this bill.