

Kimberley Paradee
Gardiner
LD 1539

February 8, 2022

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

Dear Senator Heather Sanborn, Representative Denise Tepler, and members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am writing to express my strong support for LD 1539, An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care.

During our infertility journey, I required a mental health leave of absence from my career as a labor and delivery nurse. The emotional implications of helping families to safely bring their babies into this world whilst being unable to afford one of my own was (and is) so painful.

During my leave of absence, we considered relocating to a state with mandated fertility care. We even spent a few months with family in New Jersey, solidifying a backup plan in case our first cycle of in vitro fertilization failed. With great hesitation and the unwavering ground rule that if our first cycle failed that we would sell our home in Brunswick and move to New Jersey, we paid our deposit and anxiously awaited the results. The incredibly skilled team at Boston IVF in South Portland helped us to overcome every hurdle, and in June of 2021, I gave birth to our daughter. We are fortunate to have been able to start our family here at home.

After my daughter was born, the emotional implications of my fertility journey did not diminish; if anything they heightened. I returned to work as a labor and delivery nurse when my daughter was 12 weeks old. About a month later, I realized that in order to be the best parent for my daughter, I needed to heal my heart. My husband and I sold our home in Brunswick and moved in with family in Gardiner, which allowed me the freedom to take a hiatus from my career and focus on my family.

We are just one couple, but I know we are not the only ones. The lack of a fertility insurance law puts our state at an economic disadvantage from our neighboring states that have them. Thank you for reviewing my written testimony.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Paradee
100 School Street Gardiner, Maine 04345
207-512-6275
kbparadee@gmail.com