

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 am the CEO of Boston IVF, the only IVF center currently operating in the State of Maine. We have locations in Portland (our main location with IVF laboratory) and Bangor. Boston IVF is one of the largest IVF centers in the United States and in addition to our locations in Maine, Boston IVF has 7 total IVF centers and more than 25 offices in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Upstate New York and Indiana. I strongly support LD 1539, "An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care". Health insurance policies in Maine should provide coverage for fertility diagnostic care, fertility treatment for fertility patients, and medically necessary fertility preservation.

I believe that the disparities in insurance coverage of fertility treatment represent injustice in the health care system. Although the World Health Organization and American Medical Association define infertility as a disease, there is still widespread inequity in fertility care. Because there is a lack of insurance in Maine and nationally for fertility care, it is implied that infertility is undeserving of financial support, leaving many patients unable to afford to try to achieve their dream of parenthood. Improving access to care through LR 884 would help address such disparities. It is a fundamental human right to reproduce, but this is currently under threat due to the financial barriers to fertility care.

If there is a mandate for infertility treatment in Maine, Boston IVF would take the opportunity to expand our practice, hire a new physician and several office staff and increase the number of jobs in Maine. We have recently done this in New Hampshire after they passed the infertility insurance mandate that took effect in January 2020.

Individuals and couples without fertility coverage must pay out of pocket for fertility care (or go without treatment). The cost can add up to well over \$10,000 depending on the particular services that they receive. This means that the absence of insurance coverage results in fertility care being simply out of reach for many Mainers. For those

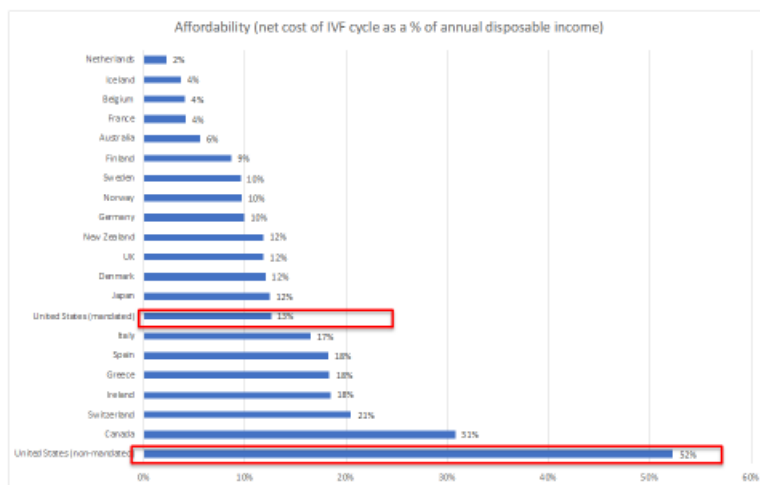
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www.BostonIVF.com

who yearn to have children, obtaining fertility care can be stressful. Private insurance coverage for fertility treatment or standard fertility preservation services can help achieve a greater equity in access to fertility care.

Insurance coverage for fertility treatment has helped to expanded access for patients in states that mandate coverage. I have attached a copy of a study from Fertility & Sterility a world renown medical journal that showed the difference in patient affordability in states that had an insurance mandate (13% of disposable income) versus non-insurance mandated states (52% of disposable income) as compared to other countries in the world.

Affordability of IVF Treatment has a Negative Impact on US Cycle Volume



Chambers, International ART costs, Fertil Steril 2014

Thank you for your time and consideration to provide access to fertility care for many individuals and couples who rely on fertility treatments to build their families.

Sincerely,



David L. Stern
Chief Executive Officer
Boston IVF

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