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***Testimony of Sen. Eloise Vitelli supporting  
LD 1357, An Act To Require Private Insurance Coverage for Postpartum Care  
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
May 5, 2021***

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler, and esteemed members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, my name is Eloise Vitelli, and I represent Senate District 23, which includes all of Sagadahoc County and the Town of Dresden in Lincoln County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 1357, “An Act To Require Private Insurance Coverage for Postpartum Care.”

Childbirth can be an incredibly rewarding and meaningful experience. But it can also be difficult, and sometimes traumatic, with long recovery times. The months after childbirth are a critical period for healing – physically, emotionally, and mentally – and for bonding with baby. When parents don’t have the coverage to get critical support and care during this time, children, families and communities are worse off.

Especially for first-time parents, it can be hard to know what to expect in the period after childbirth. Understanding what is normal and what is cause for concern is difficult without the counsel of a medical professional. Facing issues like postpartum depression or loss of pregnancy, both of which still carry a stigma, is a daunting task that no one should have to do alone. Requiring private insurers to cover more comprehensive postpartum care services and treat the whole person gives individuals and families the tools they need to be well and to thrive.

We buy health insurance expecting that it will help is through the most vulnerable and important times in our life, and it’s time insurers are required to do just that for people recovering from childbirth. Thank you to Sen. Carney for introducing this bill to support Mainers and their families. I thank the committee for its consideration, and I hope you will vote ought to pass.