

My name is Sandra Pelletier, and I am the Chief Executive Officer, President and Executive Director of Evofem Biosciences, Inc., a commercial-stage biopharmaceutical company committed to developing and commercializing innovative products to address unmet needs in women's sexual and reproductive health.

I come from a multi-generational family in Caribou, Maine. I graduated from Caribou High School and Husson University and continue to have deep roots in the state.

My company, Evofem Biosciences, brought the new contraception Phexxi to market. Phexxi is the first and only hormone-free, on-demand, prescription vaginal gel approved in the United States for the prevention of pregnancy. It was approved by the FDA on May 22, 2020.

Despite the Affordable Care Act and state laws, women have faced numerous barriers in accessing this new type of contraception. Examples of these barriers include payers requiring women to try and fail or formally refuse up to nine contraceptive options before a payer will approve coverage.

Large payers and Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) like Express Scripts and CVS Caremark that cover women in Maine currently exclude Phexxi. Approval requires time and effort from the provider and delays a women's access to contraception. Even Maine's state plan (MaineCare) currently requires a prior authorization to obtain Phexxi. This is the exact language from their formulary for approval: *"approval only if an adequate clinical reason is given why a patient is unable to comply with other preferred agents including a long acting injectable."*

It is unreasonable to require a woman to have a device that is meant for long-term use, inserted into her body. That type of contraception also requires another visit to a medical provider for insertion and removal. To expect women to go through these steps to obtain an on-demand, non-hormonal option is inappropriate clinical management.

Overall, for more than 80% of lives in Maine, accessing Phexxi requires providers to submit letters of medical necessity, or fill out burdensome prior authorizations just for coverage. And even then, that does not guarantee Phexxi would be covered at zero cost.

The updates to the LD 1954 are crucial to ensure women have access to the contraception option of their choice and are not subject to inappropriate medical management. Women should not suffer a medical hardship simply because the law is interpreted differently by payers than its true intent.