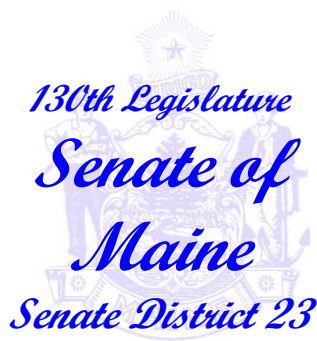




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Testimony of Sen. Eloise Vitelli supporting
LD 1954, An Act To Ensure Access to Prescription Contraceptives
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
February 15, 2022

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. I am before you today to speak in support LD 1954, An Act To Ensure Access to Prescription Contraceptives, and to introduce it on behalf of the bill's sponsor, President Troy Jackson.

The FDA's approval of the birth control pill was revolutionary for women and their ability to control the timeline of their own lives. The pill made it possible for women to decide if and when to have a family and allowed them greater access to the workforce, giving them the ability to provide for themselves. Birth control has also been used to treat a host of health conditions that women and girls face every day and that prevent them from living their lives to the fullest. The pill really has been a game changer, but it's not the right choice for everyone.

In the six decades since the pill became available, many other types of birth control have come on the market and have opened up even more options for women looking to control their own destinies. Now more than ever, women have choices when it comes to what contraceptives to take that work best for their lifestyles and their bodies.

But finding the right birth control can be a journey. Birth control's well-known side-effects, from headaches to fatigue, mood swings and more, can be debilitating. Women often work with their doctors for years to find a birth control method that works for them, without causing unmanageable side effects. When a woman finally arrives at a solution that works for her, the last thing she needs is for her insurance company to decide they no longer cover it, or to require a copayment that puts that product out of reach for her.

This bill would require insurance plans to cover at least one product from each category of contraception, at no out-of-pocket cost to patients. It closes loopholes left by the Affordable Care Act in order to better meet that legislation's original intent: that women have the right to decide what product is best for them, in consultation with their doctors – not insurance companies.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill; I hope you see its merit and choose to support it. I would be happy to answer any questions.