

*25+ Years of **Independent Practice** as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine*

Re: LD 2203 'An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Federally Approved Nonprescription Oral Hormonal Contraceptives'

February 20, 2024

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services,

I am a Nurse Practitioner who resides in Caribou and practices in Aroostook County. I am testifying on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association (MNPA) to urge you to support LD 2203 'An Act to Require Health Insurance Coverage for Federally Approved Nonprescription Oral Hormonal Contraceptives'. I have been working in healthcare since 2005. Through the pandemic, I provided primary care to folks living in Aroostook County; recently, I have been treating folks with opioid use disorder via telehealth and providing urgent care services.

MNPA supports access to timely, appropriate, high-quality, and best-practice care to promote the best health outcomes for our patients. This bill would require health insurers cover all FDA-approved over-the-counter contraceptive methods without cost-sharing and without a prescription. Decades of rigorous research, robust evidence, and experience with use across the globe show birth control pills are safe and effective for over-the-counter use. Insurance coverage of FDA-approved over-the-counter contraceptives addresses health and access equity issues. The cost, logistics and time concerns of missing work, arranging child care to schedule and attend a healthcare appointment to obtain a prescription create barriers to accessing contraception. I know first-hand that improving access to care improves outcomes for the patients I serve in Maine.

We urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 2203 and appreciate your time in reading and considering this testimony.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

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Legislative Committee member

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