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3/28/2025

Senator Carney, Chair  
Representative Kuhn, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 1154 – *An Act to Require That Informed Consent for Abortion Include Information on Perinatal Hospice*

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information in opposition to LD 1154, *An Act to Require That Informed Consent for Abortion Include Information on Perinatal Hospice*.

This bill requires, as part of ensuring informed consent, a health care professional to provide information about perinatal hospice services, including a list of available perinatal hospice services providers, to a woman whose fetus has received a diagnosis of a “*lethal fetal anomaly*”<sup>1</sup> and who is seeking an abortion. Failure to do so is considered unprofessional conduct and subject to licensing discipline. Under LD 1154, if the woman declines perinatal hospice services, the woman must certify the choice to proceed with terminating the pregnancy in writing. It requires the Department to publish and maintain a list of perinatal hospice services providers both in the State and nationally, to be available in multiple languages and further specifies that it must be organized by geographical location.

Additional clarification is needed to understand the requirement that the Department is to publish a list of providers in multiple languages, or if the bill intends that the Department will translate any of the perinatal hospice services material which will require contracted services and increase the fiscal impact of this bill. Further, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) finds the bill duplicates existing resources and standard of care practices and disagrees this is an issue that, if found to be a problem, is one to be addressed with the language as proposed in this piece of legislation, but rather more appropriately resolved through licensing standards and regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> LD 1154 defines ‘*perinatal hospice services*’ to mean comprehensive support to a pregnant woman who has received a prenatal diagnosis indicating the fetus has a life-limiting condition and may die before or shortly after birth that includes supportive care to the woman and the woman’s family from time of diagnosis through the time of birth and death of the child through the postpartum period. Supportive care may include counseling and medical care by a maternal and fetal medical specialist, obstetrician, neonatologist, anesthesia specialist, member of the clergy, social worker or specialty nurse focused on alleviating fear and ensuring that the woman and the woman’s family experience the life and death of the child in a comfortable and supportive environment

Maine CDC works with healthcare providers, Maternal Fetal Medicine and other specialists, hospital systems, public health programs, community agencies and families to increase awareness of perinatal health issues to improve the health of women, mothers and infants. In addition to the list of bereavement resources posted at <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/mch/perinatal/maternal-infant/resources.html>, this Maine CDC Maternal and Child Health webpage could accommodate links to other sources, but the Department would not be responsible for updating or managing the source content.

In conclusion, Maine CDC is in opposition to this bill as options counseling and reviewing available resources, including, as appropriate, palliative care and mental health services, are already a part of ensuring *informed consent*. Healthcare standards include providers assessing the pregnant person's ability to understand information about diagnoses and prognoses and make an independent, voluntary decision. As such, Maine CDC opposes LD 1154 and urges the Committee vote ought not to pass considering the information and services related to perinatal care available and the current standards of care specific to informed consent to abortion services.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,



Puthiery Va, DO  
Director  
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
Maine Department of Health and Human Services