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Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable Members of the Labor Committee.

I am testifying in opposition to the multiple bills attempting to roll back the hard-won Maine Paid Family & Medical Leave law.

A close friend is currently acting as carer for a sick parent. The serious illness of a loved one can throw your entire life into chaos, and the emotional, spiritual, and physical distress is great. Medical bills and other expenses are high.

All that alone is enough, but the added pressure and stress of having little to no leeway with work while trying to handle a crisis is almost unbearable. People who want to be all-in on helping their loved one cope, are instead struggling with keeping their job, negotiating very limited time off, and taking out these tensions on other members of their family who are going through the same struggles trying to hold up their end of the workload.

Additionally, it is so important to me that this law covers people who need to take time to recover and get back on their feet after domestic abuse and sexual violence. I know women who have lost jobs and housing because they fled abuse. Precarious work and financial situations keep so many people in dangerous and abusive situations, because they cannot leave.

Paid Family and Medical Leave will give working people a little more grace when dealing with the life-changing events that come our way, and take away some of that crushing pressure that comes from all sides. It is so important to keep this law intact and fully funded, as it was designed.

I urge you to vote "Ought Not to Pass" on these bills, including LD 406, LD 539, LD 952, LD 1169, LD 1221, LD 1249, LD 1400, LD 1712, LD1273, LD 1307, LD 1333.

Thank you sincerely for your time and consideration,
Erin Dodge