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Biddeford, Maine
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Hello, Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable Members of the Labor Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee today. My name is Kelsey Thompson and I am here on behalf of myself and my family. I am writing this testimony today in opposition of Bill 539, as well as the other Bills mentioned today, which will repeal the Paid Family and Medical Leave Benefits Program.

The purpose of Bill 539, as well as the several others being heard today, is to demolish the PFML Act and return these funds to the employers and employees as soon as possible. This line implies that the Paid Family Medical Leave Act harms employers and employees, when in fact, it is the complete opposite. Employees only contribute up to half a percent of their wages. Employers with 15 employees or more will contribute half a percent of employee wages, and small employers with less than 15 employees are not required to contribute to the program.

These rates are affordable and are set at 0.5% or 1% of wages depending on the size of the employer – less than \$5.75/week for the average worker. This small amount benefits the lives of workers when they will need it most.

The PFML covers a variety of qualifying reasons. This includes to care for themselves or a family member with a serious health condition, to bond with a child after birth, adoption, or foster placement, and leave for survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking. Being a new mom and having aging parents, I am at a time in my life where caring for loved ones will be top priorities, having the support of the PFML will be imperative. I am not alone, my whole generation is in this position, and having a family to care for affects everyone in this room too.

Without this support, I will not be able to care for those I love without worrying about the affects on my employment and economic situation.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote “Ought not to Pass” on these bills. Thank you!

Kelsey Thompson