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Testimony of Kate Brogan, Maine Family Planning

In Support of

LD 1476, An Act to Ensure Continued Coverage for Essential Health Care

Joint Standing Committee on Insurance and Financial Services

April 25, 2017

Senator Whittemore, Representative Lawrence, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Insurance and Financial Services, my name is Kate Brogan and I work for Maine Family Planning, Maine's statewide provider of affordable reproductive and sexual health care. I am here today to share Maine Family Planning's strong support of LD 1476, An Act to Ensure Continued Coverage for Essential Health Care. This legislation will ensure an evidence-based baseline level of preventive services for all health insurance plans in Maine.

LD 1476 would require all health plans to cover, without cost-sharing, the essential preventive services recommended by the United States Preventive Services Task Force. Made up of nationally recognized experts in prevention, evidence-based medicine and primary care, the Task Force has for over 30 years provided evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screening, counseling services, and preventive medications. LD 1476 requires coverage of all recommended preventive services receiving a grade of A or B from the Task Force, based on the strength of evidence and the balance of benefits and harms of the preventive service. These include:

- Specific screenings for women who are pregnant and newborns;

- Blood pressure and diabetes screenings for adults;
- Preventive medications such as aspirin and statins for older adults with cardiovascular risk and folic acid for women who are pregnant or are planning pregnancy;
- Cancer screening such as mammograms, pap tests, colorectal screening, and lung cancer screening;
- STI screenings including HIV, gonorrhea, and chlamydia.

LD 1476 also seeks to ensure continued coverage of routine immunizations and screenings recommended by recognized medical authorities like the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the women's health preventive services recommended by the Institute of Medicine and authorized by the federal Health Services Administration, including well-woman preventive care, breast feeding services and supplies, screening for the BRCA gene mutation, and contraception.

Codifying these required health care services at the state level will provide Mainers with the security of knowing that they will be able to maintain coverage of essential preventive health care, regardless of what happens with the federal health care debate. By ensuring this baseline level of preventive services, LD 1476 will protect the public health, reduce health care costs, and build a healthier, brighter future for Maine.