

Testimony of Jay Naliboff MD, FACOG  
Re: Rulemaking for LD 820

At a time when many states are passing legislation to restrict abortion access, Maine has chosen to support women's reproductive rights by enacting LD 820, which mandates coverage by insurers, including MaineCare, for abortion services.

Rulemaking is where the legislative rubber meets the implementation road, however. The rules enacted by the department may either facilitate or hinder a woman's access to abortion services, especially for those low-income women who would be potentially covered by MaineCare.

The process of application for Mainecare coverage requires financial disclosures and can take time. Women seeking abortion services may be minors not planning to notify their families, may be victims of coerced sexual relations, or may have other reasons for not being able to submit financial information. In addition, the time it takes to determine MaineCare eligibility may push the procedure into the second trimester which is of higher medical risk.

With the goal of facilitating access by low-income Maine women to abortion services I suggest the following: 1. Abortion services be added to Part 9, Section 4 of the MaineCare Eligibility Manual as a covered family planning service and 2. That women seeking abortion coverage be granted presumptive eligibility under the provisions of Part 3, Section 2.3. of the Manual.

Adoption of these rules would help prevent discrimination against low-income women and be consistent with the intent of the statute.

Respectfully submitted,

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