

MaineHealth

MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Synernet
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth in Opposition to LD 1225, “An Act to Provide Dignity for Fetal Remains by Requiring Their Interment or Cremation” Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Senator Carney, Representative Harnett and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Sarah Calder, Director of Government Affairs at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in opposition to the sponsor’s amendment to LD 1225, “An Act to Provide Dignity for Fetal Remains by Requiring Their Interment or Cremation.”

MaineHealth is Maine’s largest integrated non-profit health care system. We provide a full continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. Every day, MaineHealth’s over 23,000 employees are committed to fulfilling our vision of “working together so our communities are the healthiest in America.”

Our clinicians are dedicated to fostering a patient-centered care environment in which patients are fully engaged and empowered to take ownership of their health. To that end, patients that experience miscarriage or receive abortion care are treated with compassion and respect and are offered various options regarding fetal disposition that respect the patient’s unique desires and beliefs. In fact, MaineHealth is in the planning phase to offer a variety of cremation services for patients in which little or no fees are incurred, providing patients with multiple choices in post-mortem care that the bill would otherwise limit.

Moreover, patients can elect examination of the fetal remains, which can be critical in determining genetic anomalies that could impact future pregnancies and other living members of the family. Examinations can be declined, and can also vary in the scope of the examination as determined by the patient’s wishes.

The legislation before you today attempts to strip patients that experience miscarriage or require abortion care of the ability to have their own desires and beliefs respected. Additionally, it limits the ability for medical providers to perform examinations that could detect genetic anomalies, potentially saving the lives of living family members and future children.

It is for these reasons that I urge this Committee vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1225. Thank you for your time and consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions.