



Planned Parenthood  
Maine Action Fund

Senator Hickman  
Representative Supica  
Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

***RE: OPPOSITION to LD 1590 “An Act to Require Disclosure of Campaign Funding Sources”***

May 23, 2023

Dear Senator Hickman and Representative Supica and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

My name is Nicole Clegg and I serve as the Acting CEO at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England and Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund (“Planned Parenthood”). I write today to express Planned Parenthood’s strong opposition to LD 1590 – “An Act to Require Disclosure of Campaign Funding Sources.”

As you may be aware, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England provides comprehensive reproductive and sexual health care to more than 14,000 people in Maine at four health centers located in Biddeford, Portland, Sanford and Topsham. People turn to us for affordable, high-quality care including wellness exams, birth control, disease testing and treatment, cancer screenings, abortion care as well as a variety of primary care services. We see everyone who comes to us regardless of ability to pay, and in a typical year, we provide approximately \$3-3.5 million in free and discounted care to our communities in Maine each year.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England does not often submit testify on bills related to campaign finance even though we do raise and spend money on campaigns through our PAC, Planned Parenthood Maine Action Fund.

We are firm believers in campaign finance transparency, disclosure and accountability. We are also deeply concerned that the requirements in LD 1590 go too far and threaten the personal safety of our contributors and supporters.

The stated goal of LD 1590 appears to be to force disclosure of “big spenders” in Maine so that the public can see who is funding election spending. While this may be a laudable goal, it fails to acknowledge that this “transparency” is happening on the backs of donors who may be contributing to organizations subject to threats from opponents. For those donors, the disclosures in LD 1590 subject them to potential harassment and targeting. Those risks to privacy and safety have the very real consequence of chilling their speech in possible violation of the First amendment.

Planned Parenthood’s donors can face very real dangers from abortion opponents who in the past have used not only verbal threats but physical confrontation with those with whom they disagree. Forcing donors who choose to support Planned Parenthood generally to then voluntarily disclose their name and address if that contribution is then used for electoral work is not only dangerous -it deters First Amendment free speech.

Unfortunately, we live in a climate with a demonstrated rise in political targeting and violence against our organization. Given this, we need to be ever vigilant when seeking to balance the laudable goals of increased campaign finance spending transparency with the rights of donors to freely, and safely, exercise their First Amendment.

LD 1590 will do nothing less than put Planned Parenthood donors in a terrible dilemma, agree to a public disclosure which may make them targets for harassment, or worse, or suppress their right to participate in an election by “opting out” of electoral activity.

We urge you to reconsider your support of LD 1590 and to protect vulnerable donors by voting “ought not to pass.”

Sincerely,

Nicole Clegg

Acting CEO, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England