
Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee: my name is Jonathan Fanburg and I am submitting my comments as a physician who has practiced in Maine as a specialist in adolescent medicine for over 20 years. I also make my comments with the endorsement of MaineHealth and the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, both organizations that represent providers, the interests of many parents, and the health and interest of teenagers across the state of Maine.

I am completely **AGAINST** LD 1809.

1. This proposed legislation conflicts with many aspects of present Maine law.
2. It takes away from the ability of some teenagers from accessing health care at times of need.
3. It breaks the relationship between providers and their teenager patients.
4. It unravels the progress we have made with advocating for adolescents over the last 40 years.

Providers who see teenagers include parents with the health of their teenager in nearly all circumstances. However, some teenagers will not seek care if that confidentiality is offered. This may leave some teenagers at risk of untreated chlamydia, substance abuse, or depression. All of these could put the teenager at risk of greater damage to the teen’s health, and possibly life.

Parents should be involved with their child’s health, but they also need to recognize the importance of allowing their growing teenager to learn to advocate for their own health. Sometimes this means trusting their teenager to make educated decisions with their provider’s guidance in the teenager’s best interest.

Although most parents advocate for the best interest of their teenager, the proposed legislation would empower parents to refuse to treat their child who is positive for chlamydia. It would empower a parent to refuse substance abuse counseling for a child who sought care for substance use. It would empower a parent to obstruct an assault exam that a teenager consents to, even when the perpetrator could be the parent themselves.

**LD 1809 is an inappropriate legislation that obstructs healthcare and is dangerous to the health of minors.** I join the Maine AAP leadership, with support of my employer, MaineHealth, and submit this testimony in strong opposition to this legislation.

Signed,

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