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(207) 922.3222

### **Maine Family Planning Responds to Latest Trump-Pence Attack on Transgender Rights**

Maine Family Planning is outraged by reports of a recently leaked draft memo from the Department of Health and Human Services that outlines plans by the Trump-Pence administration to once again target transgender and gender nonconforming people. In returning to antiquated definitions of sex and gender that adhere to a rigid and false binary, this administration moves against science and justice, particularly as it concerns transgender individuals' rights and access to safe, competent, and affirming health care and educational services.

We at Maine Family Planning have been providing gender-affirming health care services for transgender patients—including hormone replacement therapy (HRT)—since 2015. As family planning, abortion care, and sexuality education providers, we uphold the rights of every person to bodily autonomy and self-determination. These core principles led and continue to lead us in providing care and advocating alongside transgender Mainers claiming their identities and rights to fair and equitable treatment.

This move by the administration is regressive and immoral. It places transgender people in grave danger at a time when health and economic outcomes among the U.S. transgender population already illustrate woeful inequities and widespread discrimination. The [2015 U.S. Transgender Survey's Maine-based data](#) reports that in the previous year, 23% of respondents did not see a doctor when they needed to because of fear of being mistreated as a transgender person, and 36% did not see a doctor when needed because they could not afford it. This same survey found that 40% of all respondents reported attempting suicide at least once in their lives. We know expansion of legal protections and ongoing efforts to advance understanding and social acceptance of transgender identities can help to shift these bleak statistics, just as we know this proposed policy change will lead to more anguish, violence, and death.

Yet, amidst the incessant violence and ripple effects of transphobia, transgender advocates and survivors throughout Maine are leading the way to a world liberated from the gender binary. We at MFP strive to follow and move alongside leaders of local LGBTQ+ youth groups, the [Maine Transgender Network](#), the [Maine Health Equity Alliance](#), and [Equality Maine](#) in order to eliminate health disparities for Maine's transgender community. We seek to continually rededicate ourselves to providing compassionate and competent health care and sexuality education, and to lift up the policy changes necessary to ensure transgender Mainers' full access to and participation in public life.

To our transgender and gender non-conforming patients and community members: We stand with you, today and every day.