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## Maine Choice Coalition 2015 Legislative Priorities

Coalition for Maine Women Staff

*Coalition for Maine Women*

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**Coalition for Maine Women  
Maine Choice Coalition  
2015 Legislative Priorities**

**SUPPORT – Increased Access to Women’s Health Care Services**

By expanding access to women’s health care, women with low incomes can receive critical disease prevention and essential preventative health services such as lifesaving cancer screenings, annual exams, birth control, testing & treatment for STD's, breast health care, Pap tests, sexual health education, and information and health counseling.

**SUPPORT – Strengthening Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault**

No victim of domestic violence or sexual assault should lose her job because of the actions of an aggressor. By strengthening Maine law, we can ensure that victims of violence cannot be fired for taking leave to go to court, receiving medical treatment or mental health care, and seeking other services they need to recover.

**SUPPORT – Robust Early Childhood Programs for Maine Families**

Early childhood programs provide children with a basis for lasting academic success and reduces state costs for remedial education, health care, and corrections. Access to early childhood programs provides parents with a greater ability to work outside the home and strengthen their family’s financial security. Investment in early childhood programs is an investment in Maine’s future.

**SUPPORT – Ending the Shackling of Pregnant Inmates**

Maine is the only state in New England that does not have a law or policy governing the shackling of pregnant prisoners. Aside from being an affront to liberty and dignity, shackling a pregnant woman has documented health risks for the woman and her pregnancy.

**OPPOSE – Any Attempt to Restrict Women’s Access to Abortion Care**

Maine has stood against attempts to undermine women’s autonomy over our own bodies and to abridge our right to an abortion. We oppose any attempt to restrict a woman’s ability to make her own health care decisions.

**OPPOSE - Attacks on Women & Families Living in Poverty**

For Maine to thrive, women and their families must thrive. Our policymakers should focus on real solutions for increasing the economic security of women and their families. We can’t afford to waste time on attacking those living in poverty based on stereotypes, anecdotes, or ideology.

**OPPOSE – Discrimination Based on Religious Objection**

Freedom of religion is protected by the Bill of Rights and Maine Constitution. An Act to Protect Religious Freedom (LR 1267) is an unnecessary & dangerous proposal that causes many problems and solves none. It would open the door to increased discrimination, public safety concerns, and an increase in lawsuits that would clog our court system. Condoning this type of legislation would result in significant steps back for women’s equality.