



Reproductive Rights and Health Care

The Maine Women's Lobby has been on the forefront of Maine's pro-choice movement since 1978.

Highlights of Legislative Achievements 1978-Present

1979 Anti-choice legislation defeated every year.

Maine Women's Lobby worked consistently to defeat anti-choice legislation as a leader in the Maine Choice Coalition, which, in 1997, was successful in preventing Maine from being among the states enacting bans on abortion procedures.

1990 Coverage for mammograms established.

The Maine Women's Lobby heads effort to require all private insurance policies to provide coverage for screening mammograms.

1993 Passage of Reproductive Privacy Act.

The Maine Women's Lobby leads effort to codify provisions of *Roe v. Wade* into Maine law, which will uphold Maine's commitment to reproductive privacy if *Roe* is overturned.

1996 Maine legislature enacts Act to Promote the Health of Newborns and their Mothers.

This Maine Women's Lobby priority bill required insurers to provide coverage for medically appropriate postnatal services.

1999 Defeat of anti-choice abortion ban referendum.

The Maine Women's Lobby served on the steering committee for the NO on 1 Campaign, which led the defeat of the so-called "partial-birth" abortion ban at the polls.

1999 Maine enacts Contraceptive Equity Law.

Maine Women's Lobby works with the Maine Choice Coalition to require insurance coverage for prescription contraceptives, to the same extent as other prescription drugs or outpatient medical services.

2000 Expansion of Medicaid coverage.

The Maine Women's Lobby helps win expansion of health care coverage for parents who have incomes up to 150% of the poverty level.

2001 Family Life Education enacted as part of comprehensive school health education.

The Maine Women's Lobby worked with Maine Choice Coalition partners to enact a *first-in-the-nation* comprehensive state approach to teaching age-appropriate, medically accurate contraception information, disease prevention, and healthy relationships, along with abstinence.

2004 Increased access to emergency contraception.

Maine became one of the first states in the nation to expand access to emergency contraception access at pharmacies through collaborative physician-pharmacist agreements.

2008 Defended against harmful proposed budget cuts.

The Maine Women's Lobby helps lead the effort to defend against proposed cuts that would have eliminated state funding for domestic violence and sexual assault services, closed over a dozen family planning clinics, restricted access to public assistance, eliminated health coverage for over 8,000 low-income individuals and taken away prescription drug coverage for 18,000 others. Working with the Maine Can Do Better coalition, the Maine Women's Lobby advocates for a more balanced approach to resolving the budget deficit and restores funding for critical services.

2008 Protected against toxic chemicals in kids products.

Maine becomes the first state in the nation to set up a comprehensive chemical policy to require safer alternatives to dangerous chemicals in consumer products. The Maine Women's Lobby joined the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine to pass this bill by an overwhelming margin. It covers products intentionally marketed for children and any other consumer product that may expose a child or fetus. Chemicals of high concern include those specifically harmful to women; for example a likely carcinogen, reproductive or developmental toxicant or endocrine disruptor.

2009 Established first in the nation recycling for mercury containing light bulbs.

As part of the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine, the Maine Women's Lobby worked to establish a recycling program for light bulbs such as compact fluorescents that contain small amounts of mercury. Mercury exposure is proven to negatively affect women's reproductive health, along with having many other health risks.

2010 Protected Women's Health by Banning DECA from plastic pallets and all consumer goods.

DECA, the toxic flame retardant, was being used in plastic shipping pallets. Because DECA is unstable, it quickly leaches into the food, air, and water nearby – leading to serious health effects when it ends up in people. The Maine Women's Lobby worked in partnership with the Alliance for a Clean and Healthy Maine to ban DECA's use once and for all.