**Advocacy Committee Minutes, 10/4/23**

Attendees: Meredith Munn Wheeler, Kate LeBlanc, Beth Seniw, Janene Oleaga

There was discussion of 2023 RNE Advocacy Award, which is given during our annual conference (which this year will be virtual on 11/18/23). Suggestions submitted by committee members during meeting or by email included VT State Senator Ruth Hardy, Maine State Rep. Matt Moonen, NH State Sens. Perkins-Kwoka and Carson, advocate Polly Crozier from GLAD Law, and MA State Senator Paul Feeney.

Kate will create a list of past winners, including their state. Ideally, we want a diversity of states represented among the winners. There has not been an official description of the Advocacy Award or the process for choosing (most years there has been an obvious choice for RNE staff, which has been approved by advocacy committee leadership.) Moving forward, we’d like the advocacy committee to come up with nominations, discuss and make recommendation(s) to the executive committee for final choice.

Proposed description: The annual Advocacy Award recognizes an individual, group or organization who over the past year has advanced fertility and family building through advocacy and/or policy efforts [that align with the values of Resolve New England].

After discussion, those present decided to recommend Senator Feeney to the EC as this year’s award winner. He is the lead sponsor or co-sponsor of several RNE legislative priorities, and has publicly shared his own experiences with infertility and recurrent loss. We feel this award would further strengthen his commitment to our issues and community.

Our bill is still alive in Vermont (the last state in New England to pass a fertility insurance law), but it will be an uphill battle. Kate is meeting with our lobbyist Allison Crowley this week to discuss next steps. We are focused on the House version of the bill as it has fertility preservation as a required benefit.

Maine's fertility insurance bill became law in 2022 and will take effect January 1, 2024. Rulemaking/regulations still has not been released. Kate will follow up again with Insurance department as the delay is concerning (was expected by end of summer).

There was discussion about the cost study done in New Hampshire related to expanding the fertility law to be more inclusive of LGBTQ and unpartnered people trying to become parents. Catherine Tucker submitted a letter raising many concerns about the study that was conducted with no input from advocates or providers (we think). Meredith and Janene asked Kate to send a copy of the study and letter to them.

Janene knows Leda Anderson from Mass. Medical Society.

Discussed the embryo storage safety bill in Rhode Island that will likely be refiled.

Next meeting: November 1, 7pm on Zoom.