

Senator Carney, Representative Harnett,
and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary:

4-19-23

I am writing to testify against LD 1412, RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Establishing That All Maine Residents Have Equal Rights Under the Law, which was submitted by Representative Reckitt.

While the proposed amendment purports to be for the purpose of keeping one's rights from being denied or abridged based on sex, there is already a guarantee in Article I, Section 6-A of our state's constitution stating that no one is to be denied equal protection of the law or be denied enjoyment of their civil rights or be discriminated against. That would seem to say that, whether man or woman, our rights are already afforded equal protection. (And of course, the Declaration of Independence and our national Constitution also view men and women as equal and afford to all the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.)

Unfortunately, the proposal to amend the state constitution mirrors the recent attempt nation-wide to add an ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) to our national Constitution. Having failed at that, it has become the current strategy for those who did not succeed at the latter to now try the former – hoping to gain on a state-by-state basis what could not be procured federally.

It is widely recognized that the national amendment that failed was not so much about equality as about expanding the "right" to abortion. It is not a stretch then to divine that the proposed amendment to our own state-level constitution is also more about setting up a framework that would allow for an expansion of abortion "rights" than about ensuring an equality that women already possess.

Abortion is, quite simply, the taking of an innocent human life. The opening of our state constitution declares in Section I, Natural Rights that all people have the unalienable right to enjoy life. And this unalienable right—the right to life—is also delineated in the Declaration of Independence and the 14th amendment of our national Constitution. It is unalienable because it comes from the Creator. It is not a right that is conferred upon us by a governmental body; rather it is a God-given right that should be protected. But government cannot claim to protect life while also making allowance for the killing of the unborn under the guise of "choice." Every life is precious. Unborn children and partially-born children have as much right to life as you or I, but they have no voice. Even in this enlightened, scientific era where we can see both 3D ultrasound pictures and video images captured from the womb, we live in such moral darkness that these infants still need others to speak out in their defense.

It says in the preamble to our state constitution that we, the people of Maine, "implore God's aid and direction." Do we truly mean that anymore? Ecclesiastes says, "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin . . . Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?" If we the people of Maine desire God's aid and direction on this or any other matter, we have only to look in His Word to find it. He shows us repeatedly through Scripture that children are precious in His sight. Take, as one example, the text of Psalm 127:3 –

*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD:
and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

If only we the people of Maine (and we the people of America at large) could align ourselves with God's heart on this!

To secure the blessings of life and liberty for our posterity, I respectfully ask that you vote **against** LD 1412. And I thank you in advance for your time and for your sincere deliberation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lisa E. Beal

Cherryfield, ME, USA