

Deborah Milite
Freeport, Maine
LD 1412

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Maine Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Deborah Milite of Freeport, Maine. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue. I urge you to oppose 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.

This is a redundant and therefore unnecessary amendment to the Maine Constitution. Both our United States Constitution and Maine State Constitution, along with many other state and federal laws already in place, now provide citizens equal rights necessary for us to exercise our rights and responsibilities as citizens in a free constitutional republic and state. It is, sadly, a too often belatedly realized principal that redundancy of laws is confusing to its citizens, diluting the force of and obedience to law: "Useless laws weaken the necessary laws." Montesquieu, *De L'Esprit des Lois* (The Spirit of the Laws) [1748] XXIX, 16. Conversely, making this amendment part of the Maine Constitution will have many, perhaps inadvertent, but surely adverse consequences for women and children. It could be used to overturn all restrictions on abortion; remove gender designations in locker rooms, restrooms, jails, and hospital rooms; require, should it be reinstated, military-age women to be drafted into military service and front-line combat; remove support for women in situations of abandonment by their husbands – alimony and child support; and remove protective workplace laws that provide special accommodations for pregnant and nursing women. Indeed, because of the "law of unintended consequences," the many negative ramifications of this Amendment may not even be apparent prior to such enactment but become painfully real over time, too late and too difficult to amend or remove. Therefore, because of the great concerns and I many others have to the provisions and consequences of LD 1412, I urge The Committee to oppose LD 1412, and to protect women by voting, "Ought Not to Pass." Thank you for your time and service.