

Rev. Marvin Ellison
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LD 1619

As a Christian minister (now honorary retired), father, and grandfather, I strongly support LD 1619, which will improve Maine's current public policy by allowing women, in consultation with their physician, to terminate a post-viability pregnancy whether or not the woman's life and/or health may be at risk. These tender decisions, which typically arise only in the most tragic and saddest of circumstances, should be made by the immediate individuals involved along with those they trust and turn to for guidance and support. As a chaplain, I have sat with, prayed with, and supported women who have wrestled with these matters and done so with the utmost care, moral integrity, and deep compassion for themselves and others. Although we might all wish that problematic pregnancies did not occur, the reality is that they do, so we should design our public policy in ways that do not add burdens at such a difficult time to women, their families, or their health care providers. Our guiding moral principles should be twofold: first, to do no harm by placing unnecessary restrictions on women and their physicians, and, second, to trust women to do the best they can, often under less than optimal circumstances. LD 1619 is good and principled legislation that honors both these principles and, in my judgment, ought to be passed.