

Beedy Parker  
Camden. ME  
LD 616

Testimony in support of the Bills in the Maine Legislature, May 1 hearings, 2023, to protect Abortion in Maine

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To the Maine Legislative Committee on Judiciary, Senator Anne Carney and Representative Matt Mooney, Chairs, and members of the Committee.  
To the Maine Legislative Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, Senator Donna Bailey, Representative Anne Perry and members of the Committee

My name is Beedy Parker. I have lived in Camden Maine since 1975. I am sending testimony here in support of LD 616 An Act to Protect Health Care Professionals Providing Reproductive Health Care Services - and the other bills that will protect our right to abortion that are being introduced today)

I am a member of Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights, an organization founded here in Maine to advocate for reproductive rights, including abortion, here and in the rest of the USA.

We come, many of us, from personal experience of the time before Roe vs Wade, when many women and girls could not access birth control, and abortion was prohibited and often dangerous if obtained illegally.

We know from experience, what is happening to women who need abortions now, where it is banned again, We know how difficult and frightening it can be to get help.

We come from a time when we were ashamed (or supposed to be), and afraid, if we needed an abortion, because we were not in a position to want a child.

I come from experience, experience of what life is like where abortion is prohibited, of knowing women in Third World countries (dictatorships, actually), where they could not choose to have the small families that they could afford and take care of adequately.

I come from experience of being a teenager in this country, who fell in love, was pressured to have sex, and had no birth control. This happens all the time, and it always will, unless we can help each other.

I come from experience of being a single parent with two young children and getting pregnant while using an IUD, and being denied an abortion because it was still illegal.

I come from experience of knowing the doctor who inserted the IUD could not remove it without causing what would be interpreted as an abortion, which would have endangered his hospital's service of giving IUDs to low income women who needed them (this was in Massachusetts in 1969).

And I learned, when I started to bleed and he agreed to give me a D&C, that the IUD was embedding in the wall of the uterus and had almost perforated that wall, which would have resulted in sepsis, and even death.

This is how much we valued the lives of women in the years before Roe vs Wade. Is this the country we must live in again?

We live in a land where sex is constantly advertised and used for marketing everywhere, where men are still expected to triumph in sex, where girls are encouraged to be sexy and to have sex, and women who love, married or not, want to have sex in a close relationship,

But now they are not to be allowed to refuse, to have a child?

What kind of a trap is that?

We need to protect the right to abortion, make birth control and reproductive care easily available, inexpensive, and normal, not shameful. We need to protect the PR

actioners who give us the care we need, and teach ourselves not to be ashamed of our reproductive lives.

I urge you to vote in support of LD 616, and the other bills being heard today, which will protect our reproductive rights as women and as the living human beings with human rights, that we are.

Thank you for your attention. I will try to answer any questions you ask.

Beedy Parker, Camden, Maine.