

My name is Steven Hileman, and I am a husband, father of six beautiful children, and resident of Bucksport, Maine. I am writing to voice my objection to LD 1619. As you are aware, Maine currently has expansive provisions for abortion, so the proposal for non-restricted abortion on demand policy up until the point of birth is baffling. Not only is this an outright reneging of our governor's campaign statement that she would not alter Maine's abortion laws, at best, this would seem a naïve proposition lacking understanding of ethics and biology, and at worst a willful plan to undermine life, biological and medical science, and the large portion of Maine's residents who oppose late-term abortion. Either way, this bill is unjust, unnecessary, and unconscionable.

Stated plainly, anyone being intellectually honest has to admit that this bill unquestionably allows for the killing of viable human beings. I understand that there are truly difficult and heartbreaking situations that require medical intervention, and our current laws make provisions to protect the life and health of the mother. However, striking down that provision and allowing late-term abortion for any reason deemed necessary by a medical professional most certainly provides for the killing of *viable* humans, and is one step closer to outright infanticide (though the difference between the two is negligible, realistically). Please carefully consider your position on this point, and the ramifications both now and in the future of opening the door to this extreme abortion provision.

One of my children, now a healthy 17 year old, was born at 26 weeks, so I know first-hand that these babies are fully formed, viable children. The great effort and expense of providing care for my premature baby *both before and after his birth* testify to this fact. To think that it is acceptable to end a viable child's life based on location (inside the womb or outside the womb) is unconscionable. Allowing unrestricted abortion of viable children is truly horrific and is a blatant disregard to biological and medical science, as well as a disregard for life in general.

Finally, removing penalties currently in place for unlicensed abortion providers is simply another shift away from protecting women and children and expanding extreme abortion policies. I cannot understand any good reason to remove the penalty clause from the current law. This does NOT protect women.

Taken together, this is all deeply troubling, and I ask you to carefully consider if this legislation is truly good for protecting life and protecting and respecting women and children in Maine.

We say "Maine- the way life should be," but perpetuating a culture of death is not the way life should be. The children we allow to be killed would not agree that this is how life should be. Women carrying the pain and trauma of ending their viable child's life is not the way life should be. I stand unapologetically against LD 1619. I stand in defense of children and women. Please join me in doing so and reject this unnecessary and extreme bill.

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