

Stephen Burkett
Rockland
LD 1619

Dear Senator Caney, Representative Moonan, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee:

Thank you for acknowledging my testimony in opposition to LD 1619. I am hoping, and praying, that you will cast your valuable votes to oppose this bill!

As State of Maine legislators, all of you are highly educated and very well read. It would be hard for me to believe that any of you could truly hold to the idea that a baby in its mother's womb - at whatever stage of development - could only be a mass of non-essential tissue and not a human life. For the inconvenient, inescapable, and undeniable truth is that life begins at conception. This is established medical science.

With this being said, all that a human being needs, in order to live and thrive from the moment of conception onward, is nutrition and protection. Every new human life has its own unique DNA, totally distinct from his or her mother. Thus, to allow for the destruction of a human life only days before birth, when its organs and pain sensors are fully developed, would be a tragic new development here in the state of Maine. Is this "the way life ought to be", as our state slogan goes?

This bill, LD 1619, has all the appearances of an extreme overreaction to the national Supreme Court's overturning of Roe vs. Wade this past year. After all, the termination of a baby's life before birth due to medical necessity is already covered by our current state laws. But if passed, this bill will place Maine law among the most extreme set of abortion laws in the country.

I can't help but wonder how it can be against the law to take the life of a baby five days after birth, and yet how it can soon be legal to take the life of a baby five days before its birth? Or with more time involved, how much different can a baby only five weeks before birth be from a baby only five weeks after birth? My first child was born three weeks before her due date. I can't begin to imagine how it could be morally or medically acceptable to end a baby's life at that stage of development, which is exactly what this new law in the state of Maine would allow!

After two natural birth children of our own, my wife and I were able to adopt two children - one of whom came to us soon after birth from an unwed young mother who wanted her baby to grow up to live a full and productive life. This mother decided against abortion in the final weeks of her baby's life in the womb. My wife and I are so very thankful that she did!

And now, as our state legislators, you yourselves have the ability to decide against abortion in the final weeks of countless numbers of babies' lives still in the womb. I hope, and I pray, that you will decide to vote against this bill!

Thanks again for your willingness to sincerely and deeply consider my testimony in opposition to LD 1619!

Yours truly, Stephen Burkett - Rockland