

**Statement by
Shannon Bessey
To Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
Regarding**

LD 1619 An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws,

LD 776, Resolution, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Establish the Right to Bodily Autonomy, and

LD 1343, An Act to Protect the Reproductive Freedom of Maine People by Preempting the Field of Abortion Regulation.

May 1, 2023

Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present before you. I am Shannon Bessey, taxpayer and citizen of Belgrade, Maine.

I am opposed to LDs 1619, 776, and 1343, but will speak only on L.D. 1619.

I work in a local elementary school right here in Augusta. I have the privilege of building into the lives of my students daily, loving them as my own. I am a mother of three sons, and just this year, became a grandmother to two beautiful twin girls.

These two baby girls, Louise and Isla, were born over a month early. They were so tiny and fragile, but were given excellent care here in Augusta. The nurses gave them excellent care, we were so grateful for that. Knowing that other baby girls in our state may not get the opportunity to be delivered and lovingly cared for like our girls is horrendous to think about. There is not one morally acceptable reason to extend the current law to include late term abortion.

My husband and I have lived in many different states while he served our country in the military. We are proud Mainers, born and raised. Maine would have one of the most extreme abortion laws in the country, if this bill passes. We do not want our state to be guilty of such evil acts. Please save our future Maine children, they are worth it.

I urge this committee to vote L.D. 1619 and the other two abortion bills before you today, "ought not to pass."