

Eva Birk  
Georgetown  
LD 1343

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Eva Birk, I am 36 years old and live in Georgetown, Maine. Today I am a mother, the breadwinner for my family and I have a career that I love in the U.S. Department of Transportation. Today I am looking back at my choice to wait to have a baby.

After leaving Medomak Valley high school in Waldoboro, Maine, and entering college I struggled with balancing a fulfilling career, taking care of myself financially, and reaching a goal I knew I always wanted -- to start a family. I made the choice to wait. I graduated magna cum laude in my college class, did a year of service in Americorps, then went back for a graduate degree. I served as a research fellow for several years before I got my first "real" job representing the construction industry in Washington DC. Even then, I knew that with over 100k in school debt, I needed to wait. I knew that for me, I personally could not start a family until I was confident I could support that family as the sole breadwinner if need be. Call me overly-independent, but that was my choice. Being self-reliant and able to take care of myself is a core part of who I am.

Last January, my husband and I welcomed baby Emma at Midcoast hospital in Brunswick. She came a few weeks later than expected and with a difficult, expensive birth. She came into a stable home with a mother who is the breadwinner and a father who is a mariner that works part time so he can take care of her. She has all the baby clothes, gadgets, and care she needs BECAUSE we waited. Access to abortion is THE key part of my story that allowed me to wait. Access to abortion allowed me to pursue this path for myself without fear, without shame and without regret. Baby Emma came at the exact right time for us. People need to be able to start a family when they decide it's right for them, which means being able to decide not to start a family when it's not right for them. If you want future Maine parents to have access to the same path I did, then please, vote Ought to Pass on LD 1619 and LD 1343, and protect the choice to wait.