

Barbara Howell  
455 Island Ave.  
Spruce Head, ME 04859  
May 1, 2023

Ann Matlack  
130 Scraggle Point Rd.  
Spruce Head, ME 04859

Dear Ann,

It is incredibly disheartening to every person in our family that the State of Maine, which we so dearly love, is considering permitting the ending of lives of healthy preborn and even ready to be born infants who are capable of surviving outside the womb.

There are so many families who would dearly love to parent such children.

My husband is a School Psychologist, and I have been a teacher and department head in public schools, a private school, and several graduate schools. We founded a state certified private school for average, above average and gifted students as well as bright students with language-based learning disabilities. We served those students and their families for nearly 40 years and were able to help many children, including both non-disabled and bright learning-disabled students. They have become successful, effective contributors. Many of the "disabled" students have earned master's degrees in a wide variety of areas.

We have also had the privilege of parenting two wonderful children who came to us as infants via adoption. Our children came to us with both amazing gifts and with challenges as do we all. It has been and continues to be our joy to help them develop their gifts and grow stronger as they have learned to manage their challenges effectively and to serve others generously.

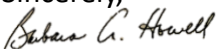
We have two wonderful grandchildren who never would have been born had their birth grandmother had an abortion. They are both extremely bright children who entered college with many college credits earned before they had even graduated from high school. Our gifted language-disabled granddaughter will graduate from the University of Maine at Orono this Saturday. She will have earned her bachelor's degree in three years. Her goal is to become a PhD Child Psychologist and employ hippotherapy as one of the tools to help children.

We will soon have a great grandchild. None of these people would have graced this earth had the original birth mothers not cared about their own preborn infants.

Please know that this kind of end to any life is not only criminal, but if *Legislative Document No. 1619* is passed into Maine law, the legislature will have removed all criminal penalties. This document even removes all criminal penalties for those people who are unlicensed and perform abortions, despite the fact that they are medically unauthorized to perform or assist in such procedures. Medical practice has standards in place to protect anyone under a physician's care. Furthermore, to move outside the medical practice regulations also invites the possibility of harm to the women who are seeking abortion.

The termination of a pregnancy simply for convenience is a horrific practice. It is hard to comprehend that LD No. 1619 would use our precious, hard-earned tax dollars to accomplish destroying a life and the undeniably precious mother-child bond.

Please consider these issues as you listen, debate, and decide the fate of so many lives. It's in your hands.

Sincerely,  
  
Barbara A. Howell, MST