

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Judiciary Committee,
My name is Robera Manter and I live in Fayette.

First, I'm not here to make anyone feel guilty. We've all made mistakes based on faulty information or motives. We can't change the past, but there can always be forgiveness when we change what we will do in the future.

I am always a bit suspicious when the title of a bill doesn't really say what the bill will do. What is being hidden, and why? In this case, the bill's title says it's to improve Maine's reproductive privacy laws. No problem there. Seeing that title, I would not expect it to be anything I would object to.

But what else does the bill do? It allows abortion after viability whenever "in the professional judgment of a physician" it is "necessary." How can it ever be "necessary" to kill a baby that could survive outside the womb? Even if the mother's life will be saved by taking the baby before term, (and such cases are extremely rare,) how can the brutal murder of the baby be "necessary"?

It is a well established principle of law that judicial proceedings require disinterested parties. A judge is deemed to have a conflict of interest if they have a possible financial interest in the result of the case. *Should the judgment of "necessity" be left up to a doctor who may profit from the abortion?*

The third thing this bill does is to remove the penalties for an unlicensed person performing an abortion. For years we've been told, "Safe, legal, and rare." How does this bill do that? Making it legal was supposed to eliminate dangerous back alley abortions. So why remove the penalties for abortion performed by a non-licensed person, unless the objective is to legalize abortion at all costs?

Does "reproductive privacy" mean the person who performs back alley abortions can continue to do so without fear of prosecution for the damage they may do to the mother as well as the child? Whose interests does this bill *really* protect? Not the mother's interests, and certainly not those of the child. But when does it become a child? Certainly by the time of viability it can no longer be referred to as a "lump of tissue," but at what point does it become human life?

Imagine you're out hunting and you see something move behind the bushes. You can't be sure if it's a deer or your hunting buddy. If you would pull the trigger, please raise your hand. If it might be some stranger or stranger's child, would you pull the trigger? What if it was a person with Down's syndrome, or some serious disability? What if the person was conceived in rape? I hope you would all agree that you would not pull the trigger if there were any chance that doing so would take *any* human life. *You must be sure of your target.*

At what age does a person achieve value as a human being? Babies have survived outside the womb at six months of gestational age. Babies' lives have been saved by surgery inside the womb at 4 ½ months. *Can you be sure* at what point it becomes a human life?

EVERY person should have a right to choose what's done with their own body. I chose not to have a COVID booster after I learned it could cause me to have another stroke. But is a growing fetus the woman's body, or is it a separate human being with a right to life? Is the woman given the information she needs? Why all the resistance to showing the mother an ultrasound? *Can she be sure?*

From the moment of conception, there is new DNA that determines the baby's sex, blood type, hair color, eye color, skin tone, and countless other features independent of the mother's. At three to six weeks from conception, the baby's heart begins beating, at a different rate from the mother's. So is it part of the mother's body, or is it a separate life, a unique individual? *Can you be sure?*

Science defines a living thing as having one or more cells, the ability to take in nourishment and to grow, the presence of DNA to pass to the next generation, and the ability to respond to stimuli. All but the last of these is present from the moment of conception. Science shows by 16 weeks the baby can hear. Twins interact with each other in the womb by week 14. There are touch sensors on the baby's hands by week 12 and on his face by week 8. We keep learning. Science shows that from the moment of conception there is a developing life, and the DNA proves that life is human. So isn't abortion the taking of a human life? *Can you be sure?*

If there is ANY doubt, please don't pull the trigger. Please protect mothers and babies (at the very least, from late term abortions and back alley abortions) by voting LD 1619 Ought not to pass.

Thank you.