



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 1, 2023

*Testimony of Rep. Kristen Cloutier in support of*  
**LD 1619, An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary*

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and esteemed colleagues of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Kristen Cloutier and I represent House District 94, which includes a portion of my hometown of Lewiston. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony as a proud cosponsor in support of **LD 1619, An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws**.

Maine's 30-year-old Reproductive Privacy Act is in need of modernization. The passage of this legislation has the ability to save the lives of people who are facing dire medical challenges and complications while pregnant.

When discussing this legislation, it is crucial to acknowledge that [abortions later in pregnancy are extremely rare](#), representing 1% of all abortions across the United States.

Largely, the reason for an abortion later in pregnancy is because the pregnancy is no longer viable, the child's life is at risk, the pregnant person's life is at risk, or a combination of these circumstances. Right now, Mainers who find themselves in the position of medically needing an abortion later in pregnancy need to travel outside of our state to seek care. Along with the emotional toll this takes, having to travel to another state for medically-necessary care puts an additional financial burden on those who may not be able to afford it.

Receiving the tragic information from your physician that your health is at extreme risk if your pregnancy continues to full-term is something no pregnant person and no family wants to hear. Passage of this legislation will help ensure that families who are dealing with the incredibly difficult decision to terminate a pregnancy will, at least, not be criminalized for seeking the care they need right here in Maine.

Today, you will hear the stories of health care workers who had to break the news to families excited to welcome their child into the world, only to be faced with a heartbreaking reality. You'll also hear stories from pregnant people and family members on the receiving end of that life-altering news.

I trust our physicians and medical practitioners who have taken an oath to safeguard the health of our community members, and I trust that people who are pregnant can make the best decisions for themselves and their families. I hope you do, too.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Kristen S. Cloutier".

Rep. Kristen S. Cloutier  
Assistant House Majority Leader