

**Good Afternoon**

**My name is Ruth Oakley,**

**Thank you for allowing me to submit a written testimony before you today on LD 1619, a bill that determines life or death for unborn human life.**

**Information given here today is an abbreviated version of facts found on the Mayo Clinic Website. <https://mayoclinic.org>**

**I am using a summary of the facts to expedite my point.**

**Please follow along with me as I briefly outline the time frame for human life.**

**I begin with:**

**By Week 3 Conception occurs as the sperm and egg unite**

**By Week 5**

The embryo is now made of three layers. The top layer( which) will give rise to(the) baby's outermost layer of skin, central and peripheral nervous systems, eyes, and inner ears.

(The) heart and a primitive circulatory system will form in the middle layer of cells. This layer of cells will also serve as the foundation for the baby's bones, ligaments, kidneys and much of the reproductive system.

The inner layer of cells is where (the) baby's lungs and intestines will develop.

**By Week 6**

Growth is rapid this week. Just four weeks after conception, the neural tube along your baby's back is closing. The baby's brain and spinal cord will develop from the neural tube. The heart and other organs also are starting to form.

## **Fetal Heartbeat**

**A fetus has a heart beat as early as 4 to 6 weeks after conception**

## **By Week 7**

(the) baby's brain and face are growing.

## **By Week 8**

Fingers have begun to form. Small swellings outlining the future shell-shaped parts of the baby's ears develop and the eyes become obvious. The upper lip and nose have formed. The trunk and neck begin to straighten.

## **By Week 9**

The baby's skeleton is forming, but the bones are still soft. Little eyelids form but stay closed, and a nose appears.

## **By Week 10**

During an ultrasound, you might see how the baby moves, even though one can't feel it yet.

## **By Week 11**

The baby's head still makes up about half of its length. However, the baby's body is about to catch up.

The baby is now officially described as a fetus. Red blood cells are beginning to form in the baby's liver. By the end of this week, the baby's external genitalia will start developing.

## **By Week 12**

There's now a recognizable profile, with a clear nose and chin.

**By the end of the third month**, the baby is fully formed, with arms, hands, fingers, feet, and toes. Little hands can open and close. Fingernails and toenails are beginning to develop, and the external ears are formed. Teeth are starting to form. The baby's reproductive organs also develop. The circulatory and urinary systems are working, and the liver produces bile.

**One important question to ask therefore, is this:**

### **When does the baby feel pain?**

As the medical evidence has shifted in acknowledging fetal pain perception prior to viability, there has been a gradual change in the fetal pain debate, from disputing the existence of fetal pain to debating the significance of fetal pain.

According to: [Derbyshire and Bockmann 2020](#); Abstract (from Catholic Medical Association)

Science conclusively establishes that a human **fetus** has the capacity to experience pain by **at least 20–22 weeks**.

Given these scientific facts concerning human life and its development, I urge the panel to vote **NO on LD 1619**.

This bill goes too far in eliminating unwanted human life.

As Mainers, we have the opportunity to educate with science, and look for alternatives to abortion, such as adoption rather than destroy life in the womb.

Not to mention the harmful physical and psychological effects of abortion on women. However, that is best left for another conversation.

Therefore, I strongly **oppose** this bill and urge all of you to consider science as an objective truth about human life and to protect this life from conception to natural death.

Thank you,

Ruth H. Oakley

Lewiston