

Jennifer Holst-Smith  
Gorham  
LD 1619

Jennifer Smith  
LD1619

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary.

My name is Jennifer Smith and I live in Gorham. I am happily blessed as the mother of three beautiful children. I could have been the mother of four, but I miscarried. My baby was taken from me and I was left heartbroken. Children are a gift.

I am pro-life. However, I am not an unreasonable person. I understand that there may be times that giving up a child is the option a woman deems necessary in certain circumstances. I've read about women who have had "abortions" due to being told their baby would die shortly after birth for one reason or another, that the mother's health would be in danger if she kept the pregnancy, or because the baby was a consequence of rape.

Some women follow their motherly instinct and go against their doctor's recommendations to abort a pregnancy due to perceived health concerns in relation to the mother, child or both. I have read about babies not dying but living even when the doctors were sure they wouldn't survive after birth. Mothers have survived medical issues even though they decided to keep their babies against the recommendations of their doctors. And recently, I read about a woman who was raped but refused to give up her baby, a son, who then became the light of her life.

The above medical concerns regarding mother and/or baby can usually be identified early on in a woman's pregnancy allowing her to choose abortion at that time. If a concern develops later in pregnancy our existing laws allow for managing the situation for the wellbeing of the mother and her family. Similarly, rape is known in the moment it is happening and the day after pill is readily available and can be followed up with an early term abortion if necessary.

Again, I am not unreasonable. Healthcare requires flexibility. But it is my opinion that once a baby is viable to live outside of the mother, abortion is murder. So, if a mother is diagnosed late in her pregnancy with some medical issue that deems it necessary to remove that baby from her body, by all means, I am pro- life, hers and that baby. Why can't that baby be born without its life being terminated?

We are human beings with morals and ethics. These children deserve a chance at life. Even if a mother doesn't want to keep a baby once she reaches late term pregnancy, there are other options like giving a baby up for adoption. Many women struggle with fertility and would love to be able to adopt a child.

There are many forms of birth control and abortion is not one of them. Options include but are not limited to IUD, birth control shot, patch, pill, diaphragm, the day after pill, all much cheaper than having an abortion. And dollars are not the only cost of an abortion. There can be complications causing hemorrhaging, sepsis, infections, future infertility, and other health issues. On top of that there are other physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional costs that are rarely considered or even talked about like PTSD, guilt, shame, regret, depression, anxiety, addictions and more.

Late term abortion is murder. One could even call it human sacrifice.

Where did our morals and ethics go? Where did all of the mama bears go, the mothers who would protect their babies at the cost of their own lives?

I am a mama Bear and my friends, my family, my God, and my children undeniably know this.

The majority of citizens in Maine do not want this to pass. You work for the citizens of this state. Do your job and do the right thing.

Thank you.

