

Tessa Burpee
Brewer
LD 1619

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Maine Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Tessa Burpee. I live in Brewer and I am writing to testify in opposition to LD 1619, An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws.

After my husband and I had been married for a year, we were excited to start a family. As the months went by though, it seemed we would never get pregnant. After a brief consult with a doctor, the diagnosis was given: infertility. It was devastating. We prayerfully considered our options and decided to look into adoption.

We contacted House of Ruth, a ministry to birthmothers. They come along side women in unplanned pregnancies, help them consider the benefits of choosing life and then support them in parenting or choosing adoption. I'm incredibly thankful that a birthmother picked our profile and chose life for her unborn baby girl. We met her in person when she was seven months along. Baby girl was moving and kicking. We experienced the joy of feeling a little kick as if she was saying hello to us.

Two months later, we had the privilege of attending her birth. My husband cut the cord. We rejoiced with the birthparents, their families and the pregnancy center who had supported them throughout the pregnancy. The nurses and doctors remarked they had never seen anything like it before. The picture on the hospital birth announcement page included all four parents with our baby girl. Because this was in another state, we spent a week there with our newborn baby waiting for paperwork, supported by two birth families who loved us like their own. Relationships began that endure to this day. My daughter is 14.

I am humbled every time I think about the miracle of my daughter's birth. God took two painful situations - infertility and an unplanned pregnancy - and made something beautiful, full of joy and hope and healing. A life.

When my daughter was five, her birthmother and her birthfather's mother and sister came to visit us. As my vivacious five year old bounded in the room where they were staying to greet them, I was not prepared for how hard I would cry being reunited with her birthmother. The bond we share is difficult to describe in words. I am a mom because of her choice. She went on to school, pursued a career, got married and a year ago, had an adorable baby girl. She is reveling in the joys of motherhood. Her life is beautiful and full. So is mine.

So is my daughter's.

Please oppose LD 1619.