

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. I am Robin Pellerin from Levant and I am testifying against LD 1619, "An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws."

The world has a long and sordid history of cultures that dispose of unwanted children and perform barbaric practices on other humans for unconscionable reasons. In Rome, unwanted babies were left to die on the banks of the Tiber River. In Greece, unwanted babies were left out on the plains to suffer starvation and exposure. In Phoenicia, you could place your child in the outstretched arms of the god Molech, whose stiff, straight arms would let these innocent children fall immediately into the fire below to suffer the agony of being burned alive.

In more recent history, cannibalism and brutal violence in the South Pacific was claiming the lives of untold thousands. The Chinese were binding the feet of baby girls, so each foot was about 3 inches long, and every step was painful. In Africa, some tribes were mutilating the vaginas of baby girls, so that sex would always be painful, and therefore, perhaps, she would be less likely to seek out sexual partners other than her husband.

In many areas of the world, a civilizing and dignifying influence came in primarily when Judeo-Christian values entered the culture. In Rome, it was Christians who waited by the Tiber to pick up and care for abandoned babies. In the South Pacific, the message of Christianity that told there was no need to kill babies caused one elderly Pacific Islander to cry out, "Oh if I had known these blessings were in store for us! Then I would have saved my children. I shall die childless, though I have been the father of nineteen children."

Again, an important trailblazer in bringing liberty and justice to the innocent and oppressed came in the late 18th century in the form of the British MP William Wilberforce, who dedicated his life to ending the slave trade, and reforming the base injustices of society. We have many examples of cultures moving away from their barbaric practices toward a society that dignifies people, rich and poor, young and old, able or disabled.

The United States was a nation founded on principles of justice, tranquility, welfare, and liberty for all of its citizens. This was a wonderful opportunity to place these virtues at the core of our nation's founding documents, and its culture.

LD 1619, is an opportunity for us in a first-world, civilized country to go a step beyond foot binding, beyond vaginal mutilation alone, and enshrine in our state law, anachronistic and barbaric practices that only belong to the bygone times when people believed that their cruel deities required this for their survival. It is an embarrassment to civilized society that this measure is being considered. Late term abortion, is a gross injustice, and an appalling practice.

There is no reconciling the mutilation and killing of a fully-formed baby in the womb with the constitutional principle of securing, and I quote our constitution, "the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."