

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Rev. Paul Marquis. I am a Roman Catholic priest in the state Maine and have been for more than 37 years. I am in strong opposition to LD 1619, An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws.

Who is the legislature to play God? LD 1619 empowers men and women to determine when a life is over. Life begins at conception. LD 1619, if passed, would allow innocent children of God to be murdered.

As a Catholic hospital chaplain, I have accompanied many a pregnant woman, or couple, with a child they were told by experts was not viable and should be terminated. All the ones I accompanied reached out for guidance, and often complained that doctors were pressuring them to abort, saying this child is not worth the effort. I am glad to say that most resisted the efforts of the experts, and chose life. Some children did not live long after birth, but many did and I run into them at church, grown adults having children of their own now. Those who died, the parents loved them for the short time they had them, celebrating Baptism as a sign of hope, and were ever grateful they did not choose to abort and miss their time with their child.

I have also walked with many women, and men, who lost children via abortion. Their grief and guilt brought them home to God where they have experienced healing and mercy, and they are often the most vocal supporters of the unborn, wishing to spare others their grief and pain. I heard some of those men and women testify yesterday.

Maine does not have death penalty for the most violent criminals. The argument is their lives matter, and offenders should be counseled and receive treatment. Hardened offenders, we are told, deserve a second chance at life. And I share that belief? I have done some limited prison chaplaincy as well. I am Pro-Life from conception to natural death; thus, I oppose Capital Punishment and Physician Assisted Suicide as well.

What about these precious babies' chance at life? Why not counsel the mothers and provide support and promote adoption. That would be a better use of our tax dollars than executing a defenseless baby.

How in good conscience can you, under any circumstance, support legislation that would allow the murder of an innocent child right up to birth?

There were over 16 hours of testimony from the people of Maine in **OPPOSITION** to this legislation. The will of the people is that this bill wrong and barbaric. Supporting this legislation is acting as an accomplice to murder. Please, examine your conscience, and listen to the people of this state who say this bill is wrong and vote **OUGHT NOT TO PASS**.

Respectfully,
Rev Paul R Marquis
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