

January 18, 2024

Dear Representatives:

Thank you for your service and taking the time to consider this information in regards to LD780.

There is no doubt that every person should have a legal and moral right to bodily autonomy; however, this must be weighed against the rights of bodily autonomy for a second person. As you will undoubtedly hear again and again in testimony, consider that by 24 weeks, the unborn child has every organ in place and has a beating heart and detectable brainwaves. They can frown, hiccup, suck their thumb, grasp things with their hand, and hear and distinguish their mother's voice from others. Most notable is that at 24 weeks, up to 70% of babies are able to survive outside of their mother's womb. I can testify to this in that my grandnephew, born at just over 20 weeks gestation, is now a beautiful, healthy and thriving 7-year-old.

The passing of such a radical resolution as LD780 would instill a right to end the lives of preborn children up until birth. Consider that the difference between the 8-9 month preborn and the newborn is mainly a few layers of tissue and the baby's ability to breathe without the mother's help. This constitution change would be short sighted in that it sets a dangerous precedent toward dehumanizing Maine citizens and obliterating basic morals. What will be next? The effects on "personal autonomy" don't end with the birth of a child. The responsibility for a newborn can encroach on the "personal autonomy" of a new mother or mother in stressful circumstances. Will the next amendment extend the right to end life up until a month after birth?

Last year, as you considered LD1619, We the People of Maine were a united and strong voice for Maine's Preborn Citizens. Unfortunately, some of our representatives chose not to listen to We the People, with some even abdicating from voting on LD1619, knowing their party views differed from a majority of their constituents in this matter. This is an election year, and We the People of Maine will be watching how you vote in this matter. Please disengage from what seems like a political mantra and reengage with your heart and morality. This is not a political party issue; this is an issue for all of humanity.

Respectfully,

Patty Knapp  
Franklin, ME

Patricia Knapp  
Franklin  
LD 780

Please find attached letter of testimony