

**Sarah Strickland**  
**Robbinston, Maine**  
**LD780**

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Sarah Strickland, I live in Robbinston, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 780.

I am seventy years old and have enjoyed reproductive health freedoms and autonomy since I was in my early 20's. I remember very clearly when I was able to obtain my first birth control pills without comment from a physician, and when my friends and I could legally obtain an abortion which I took advantage of in Jackson, Mississippi in 1977 when I was beginning my career and not prepared to be a mother.

These life changing decisions were mine to make, and I had the autonomy to do so.

Today, in many parts of the country, women's reproductive autonomy has disappeared. It has been extinguished by legislators and judges who place their moral, legislative and religious beliefs above a woman's life and liberty. This is wrong and it undermines the very principles this country is founded upon – liberty and justice for all. Here in Maine, we have the opportunity to explicitly enshrine reproductive autonomy in our state constitution and be a beacon for what it means to be a part of a democracy that believes in individual freedom and choice.

Maine people deserve the opportunity to make their voices heard and affirm that the Maine state constitution protects reproductive rights. As elected leaders, lawmakers have an obligation to pass LD780 out of committee so that all Maine voters can weigh in directly on this issue at the ballot box.

Maine has strong laws protecting reproductive rights, but laws can be changed, and their fates can be determined from election to election. We need our state constitution to make it explicit that reproductive rights are fundamental human rights, and that our autonomy is not up for debate.

Please vote Ought to Pass on LD780. Thank you.