

DRAFT

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Cathy Lee. I am a lawyer and I live in North Yarmouth. I am here today to urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 780.

As a young woman, I needed emergency medical attention during a miscarriage and was denied that attention because, I learned only later, the attending physician did not believe in abortion and was unwilling to assist me until or unless my life was in danger. The Dr. sent me home and told me to put my feet wait and if I started to hemorrhage, to call back and then I could get the help I sought. This experience was terrifying and made me realize just how important it is for me and for all women to have control over their reproductive health and to have access when they need it.

I was born and raised in Maine and as a Mainer, I feel proud of the laws we have in our state protecting reproductive autonomy. But, laws can be changed; we can be deprived of the right to access reproductive healthcare, the right to birth control and any related testing based on changing political winds. These rights are so basic yet we simply cannot count on having them unless we explicitly enshrine reproductive autonomy in our state constitution. Basic rights like these shouldn't be up for debate. A reproductive autonomy constitutional amendment would make sure that the rights Mainers have today will be protected in the future.

Everyone should be able to make their own decisions about their reproductive healthcare and how, when, and if they decide to start a family. A reproductive autonomy amendment would explicitly enshrine Mainers' rights to do that in the state constitution.

I urge you please - vote Ought to Pass on LD 780. Thank you.