

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

It was heartbreaking when, at age 36, I had a miscarriage in my 2nd trimester. Yet, during this emotional time for me and my family, I never for a moment had to also be worried about my ability to receive the medical care I needed. Not for a second did I fear that a miscarriage could somehow be warped by legislation as it is in some states that legally second-guess if it actually was a miscarriage. Not for a millisecond could I predict a time when women's ability to obtain the professional care they need and to make choices about their own reproductive health would be subject to the whims of which political party happens to be in power. Now in 2024, basic rights to reproductive healthcare and autonomy are being undermined in state legislatures across the country.

And yet, it is also true that in certain states, constitutional ballots to protect such rights are passing by significant majorities. With LD 780, Maine has an opportunity to be such a state and explicitly protect reproductive autonomy in its constitution. Everyone should be able to make their own decisions about their reproductive healthcare and how, when, and if they decide to start a family. Everyone should be able to obtain the care and support they need when plans and hopes --such as what I had when I was 36 -- are no longer feasible and a mother's health and reproductive future could be in jeopardy. And now the decision to enshrine reproductive autonomy in our state's constitution should be made by Maine's voters at the ballot box.

Please vote Ought to Pass on LD 780. Thank you.