



PO Box 135
Woolwich, ME 04579
Tel.: (207) 6240313
Fax: (207) 6224437
mainenpassociation@gmail.com
www.mnpaorg

25+ Years of Independent Practice as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine

January 22, 2024

RE: LD 780 - RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Protect Personal Reproductive Autonomy

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association Legislative Committee to urge you to support LD 780. I live in Hampden and work as a Family Nurse Practitioner for Northern Light Health Primary in Hampden.

We strongly feel that this amendment is needed to protect the basic human right of bodily autonomy and the right to reproductive rights for all Maine people. Since *Roe vs. Wade* was overturned, we have heard countless horror stories of people prosecuted for having miscarriages, forced to carry on with a pregnancy that will not result in a viable infant, and continuing with a pregnancy that is a threat to the pregnant person's health or even life. We cannot assume that the right to abortion care will continue to be legal in our state as this could always change depending on a future election.

Abortion care is a necessary part of healthcare. Researchers have found that if abortion is banned throughout the United States, the overall number of maternal deaths would rise by 24 percent. This number is even worse for Black women, whose deaths would increase by 39 percent. The United States already has the highest maternal mortality rate in the developed world.

A ban on abortion care will also cause an increase in maternal morbidity. The rate of infant mortality would increase as well.

An amendment to enshrine the right to bodily autonomy and the right to abortion care is necessary to ensure that these rights will continue to be available in our state. As more and more states pass extreme restrictions on abortion care, we will see more patients from out of state seeking these services. Let us be a place where the right to bodily autonomy is protected for all people.

Healthcare providers have struggled to navigate their medical oath and training under these vague and unclear laws. Another unintended consequence of these laws is a decrease in providers working in obstetrics and gynecology, for fear of being criminalized for providing basic medical care.

Restricting abortion care access bucks a global trend as more women seek to have more rights over their own bodies. The rest of the world is liberalizing abortion care and access. Restricting abortion care access is a significant step backward in healthcare.

Let Maine stand for strong laws that enshrine bodily autonomy for everybody.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Saunders, FNP-C

Legislative Committee of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association

Augusta, Maine

Telephone # 621-0313

Email mainenpassociation@gmail.com