

Jillian McLeod-Tardiff
Brunswick
LD 780

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Jillian McLeod-Tardiff, I live in Brunswick, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 780.

I've been seeking reproductive health care since I was a sophomore at Greely High School in 2006. I finally got access to testing and a birth control method that worked for me when I was a junior in college in Boston. Since I moved back to Maine in 2013, I've been managing my reproductive care according to my evolving needs. Finding a way to proactively manage my health was life changing – I finally felt empowered to take care of myself on my own terms, and I felt freed to live my life according to my own values and desires.

Reproductive Justice was defined 30 years ago at the Black Woman's Caucus as the human right to maintain bodily autonomy, including the ability to have children, not have children, and to parent the children we do have in safe and sustainable communities. We all have a human right to have the safest, most desirable, and consensual sex we want, and to achieve that, we all need reliable, affordable and accessible reproductive healthcare.

I believe that healthcare is a human right. I believe that safe sex is a human right. Humans have bodies, and those bodies need care to remain healthy and functional. Human bodies are sexual bodies, and sexual bodies require special care including birth control, abortion, testing for communicable diseases and infections, and much more. In the face of increasing political threats, the Maine State Constitution should be amended to specifically define reproductive rights as human rights that cannot be infringed upon by the government or anyone.

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