

Susan Dench
Portland
LD 780

Dear Members of the Committee on the Judiciary:

An unrestricted right to abortion, throughout all nine months of pregnancy, based on an undefined umbrella has no place in the Maine Constitution. The vague term “personal reproductive autonomy” is not defined in Maine Revised Statutes, thus it will fail judicial review.

A June 2023 Gallup Poll showed 78% of Americans, a large majority, do not favor abortions in the third trimester; I agree with them.

If the Constitution were to be amended with this language, it would not only nullify existing laws in Maine, it would also ban the legislature from passing any future common-sense protections for the unborn child and mother. Things such as requiring parents to be informed of their minor daughter’s abortion and informed consent – leaving pregnant women unprepared.

This committee should also question whether LD 780 could jeopardize healthcare workers’ rights by infringing on their guaranteed First Amendment rights of conscience and religious exercise.

Since Maine has already passed some of the most progressive and far-reaching abortion laws in the world, amending the state constitution is not only expensive, but unnecessary.

Science has come a long way since January 22, 1973, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade.

There is evidence now showing that babies have a heartbeat at 4 weeks, feel pain as early as 12 weeks, and begin hearing at 16 weeks. By 24 weeks, the unborn child has every organ in place, and, with modern technology, 60-70% of babies are now able to survive outside of their mother’s womb.

The passing of such a radical resolution would enshrine a right to end the lives of unborn viable children up until birth.

It is unethical, immoral and has no place in our Constitution.

For these reasons, I strongly OPPOSE LD 780.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Dench
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