

Aspen Ruhlin
Mabel Wadsworth Center
LD 780

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Public Testimony LD 780

My name is Aspen Ruhlin, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Mabel Wadsworth Center. First, I would like to thank Senator Vitelli for sponsoring this bill, along with Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and the rest of the Judiciary Committee. For anyone who is not familiar, Mabel Wadsworth Center is a feminist sexual and reproductive health center in Bangor that has provided a wide range of services in our forty years of providing care to our community, ranging from abortion care to prenatal care, contraceptives to STI testing and treatment, gender-affirming care to vasectomies, and more. We urge members of the Judiciary Committee to vote in favor of LD 780, a constitutional amendment that would enshrine protections for reproductive rights into the Maine constitution.

Across the United States, abortion access has been attacked and limited while Maine has stood for the autonomy of its citizens by improving abortion access. This aligns with the fact that the majority of Mainers support abortion access. It is for this reason that we need a constitutional amendment: both to give citizens the chance to amend our constitution to reflect Mainer's values, and to prevent the progress we've made from being undone by politicians who do not care to represent their constituents.

Protecting abortion access is reason enough to support this constitutional amendment, but it impacts far more than just abortion. Contraceptives, prenatal care, fertility care, and other reproductive health care are all connected, and an attack on one negatively impacts the rest. We have seen this across the country: states with strict abortion bans have seen healthcare providers leave for states that won't punish them for providing medically necessary care, leading to areas without prenatal care or delivery providers. If you want to assure that people continuing their pregnancies can do so safely and with access to competent care, you must support this constitutional amendment.

Every Mainer deserves autonomy over their body, and Maine voters deserve the right to decide on constitutional amendments. Mabel Wadsworth Center urges you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 780 to support the rights of Mainers. Thank you for your time.