

January 22, 2024

Testimony in support of LD 780 RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Protect Personal Reproductive Autonomy

I am writing to share two generations of experience with women's reproductive rights. In 1964 my family returned to Wisconsin from a year living in the UK for my father's work. We were a family of four. I was nine years old, my sister three. My mother had received reproductive health care in the UK through Britain's National Health Service and had been on the pill for the duration of our stay there. Back in the US, the pill had not yet been fully legalized for contraceptive use and in the months after our return she had still not been able to obtain it. The contraceptive she was using in the meantime failed, and she found herself with an unwanted pregnancy. I can recall my childhood experience of sitting with my father and sister in an unfamiliar doctor's waiting room as, unknown to me at the time, my mother underwent an illegal abortion. Years later I learned from my mother how she had found the doctor through furtive referrals from a couple of friends, and that it had been a frightening experience. She had a d&c (dilation and curettage – the walls of the uterus are scraped) with limited anesthesia and was in significant pain for days. But because my parents could afford the procedure performed by a medical doctor in a sanitary environment, she was spared the experience of so many women seeking abortions – risky and humiliating procedures carried out in marginal circumstances.

Years later, living in Boston in my twenties, I experienced an unwanted pregnancy. I was able to obtain a safe, legal vacuum aspiration abortion with minor discomfort.

For both my mother and I, access to abortion was pivotal to living the lives we wanted for ourselves. My mother already had two children and was intent to focus on our care as well as the work she did in the community. I was not ready to be a parent and was at the very beginning of my professional life.

Women's reproductive rights, including access to safe, legal abortion, are critical to their wellbeing and to society's. Bodily autonomy is a human right. For the benefit of its citizens and to be the positive role model for other states as Maine has been on other important matters, protect women's right to choose.

Thank you,

Louise Rosen
Brunswick, Maine
207 729 3828

Louise Rosen
Brunswick
LD 780

January 22, 2024

Testimony in support of LD 780 RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Protect Personal Reproductive Autonomy

I am writing to share two generations of experience with women's reproductive rights. In 1964 my family returned to Wisconsin from a year living in the UK for my father's work. We were a family of four. I was nine years old, my sister three. My mother had received reproductive health care in the UK through Britain's National Health Service and had been on the pill for the duration of our stay there. Back in the US, the pill had not yet been fully legalized for contraceptive use and in the months after our return she had still not been able to obtain it. The contraceptive she was using in the meantime failed, and she found herself with an unwanted pregnancy. I can recall my childhood experience of sitting with my father and sister in an unfamiliar doctor's waiting room as, unknown to me at the time, my mother underwent an illegal abortion. Years later I learned from my mother how she had found the doctor through furtive referrals from a couple of friends, and that it had been a frightening experience. She had a d&c (dilation and curettage – the walls of the uterus are scraped) with limited anesthesia and was in significant pain for days. But because my parents could afford the procedure performed by a medical doctor in a sanitary environment, she was spared the experience of so many women seeking abortions – risky and humiliating procedures carried out in marginal circumstances. Years later, living in Boston in my twenties, I experienced an unwanted pregnancy. I was able to obtain a safe, legal vacuum aspiration abortion with minor discomfort. For both my mother and I, access to abortion was pivotal to living the lives we wanted for ourselves. My mother already had two children and was intent to focus on our care as well as the work she did in the community. I was not ready to be a parent and was at the very beginning of my professional life.

Women's reproductive rights, including access to safe, legal abortion, are critical to their wellbeing and to society's. Bodily autonomy is a human right. For the benefit of its citizens and to be the positive role model for other states as Maine has been on other important matters, protect women's right to choose.

Thank you,
Louise Rosen
Brunswick, Maine
207 729 3828