

Rachael Duddy
Old Orchard Beach
LD 780

Rachael McCarthy
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Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Rachael Duddy, I live in Old Orchard Beach, Maine, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 780.

There are so many reasons to wish for every person in our state and our country to possess bodily autonomy, but my reason is simple. She's 8 and a half weeks old, and she's sitting with me today. Sorry if she cries. My daughter's name is Zadie, and if it weren't for my choice in 2015 to end a pregnancy, she wouldn't be here with me today.

I discovered I was pregnant in the bathroom of my waitressing job. I had a feeling. I wasn't even late. I was pregnant, in an emotionally abusive relationship that I was desperate to escape, struggling to make ends meet, lost, and unsure of what my next step would be. I made the choice to end the pregnancy. I was six weeks, the pregnancy was the size of a lentil, and in the moments of that medical procedure, was shown more compassion by a group of strangers than I had ever received.

Because I was given the opportunity to make that choice, here is what happened: I left that relationship, and that city. I got into graduate school three times, and finally went. I pursued my dream of becoming a performer, gracing the stages of Lincoln Center and others across the world. I met my husband, moved home, married him, bought a home with him, pursued more dreams, finished a masters, and decided that I wanted to have a baby. I gave birth to her on Thanksgiving morning. None of it would have happened without my freedom of choice in 2015, and I wish the same for every person on this planet.

Thank you for hearing my story. It is one of sadness, and ultimately unspeakable joy. I encourage you to vote Ought to pass on LD 780.

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