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LD 975

Honorable members of the Judiciary,

I submit this testimony to you today with deep concern and strong opposition to Maine bill LD975, "An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion." This bill is not merely a legislative proposal; it is an assault on the fundamental rights, health, and autonomy of Maine women.

1. The Fundamental Right to Bodily Autonomy:

* LD975 seeks to eliminate a woman's right to make the most intimate and personal decisions about her own body. This is a direct attack on the principle of bodily autonomy, which is the cornerstone of individual liberty.

* The ability to control one's reproductive life is not a privilege, but a fundamental right. It is inextricably linked to a woman's ability to participate fully in society, pursue education, and achieve economic security.

* The argument that the state has a greater claim to a woman's body than she does herself is inherently patriarchal and regressive. It relegates women to second-class citizenship.

2. The Inevitable Threat to Women's Health:

* History has repeatedly demonstrated that criminalizing abortion does not eliminate it. It simply drives it underground, where it becomes unsafe and potentially lethal.

* Women facing unwanted pregnancies will resort to desperate measures, including self-induced abortions or procedures performed by unqualified individuals, leading to severe complications, infections, and even death.

* This bill will disproportionately affect low-income women and women in rural areas who lack access to quality healthcare. They will be the ones who suffer the most from the consequences of unsafe abortions.

* The claim that this bill "protects life" is a cruel deception. It actively endangers the lives of women.

3. Unacceptable Government Overreach:

* LD975 represents an unprecedented level of government intrusion into the private lives of individuals. Medical decisions should be made between a patient and their doctor, not dictated by politicians.

* The state has no right to interfere in the complex and deeply personal circumstances that lead a woman to seek an abortion. These circumstances may include medical necessity, economic hardship, or cases of rape or incest.

* This legislation sets a dangerous precedent for government control over other aspects of personal healthcare decisions.

4. The Disproportionate Impact on Vulnerable Populations:

* Low-income women, women of color, and women in rural communities will bear the brunt of this legislation. They already face significant barriers to accessing healthcare, and LD975 will exacerbate these disparities.

* These women are more likely to experience unintended pregnancies due to lack of access to contraception and comprehensive sex education.

* The claim that this bill promotes equality is a fallacy. It will widen the existing inequalities in our society.

5. The Constitutional Implications:

* The Maine constitution, like the US constitution, protects the right to privacy, which has been interpreted to include the right to abortion.

* The supreme court of Maine has affirmed those rights. This bill directly contradicts those protections.

* This bill would cause costly and time consuming legal battles, that the state will most likely lose.

Addressing Potential Counterarguments:

* "Fetal personhood": The concept of fetal personhood is a complex philosophical

and theological debate, not a matter of settled scientific fact. Legislating based on this concept infringes on the religious freedom of those who hold different beliefs.

* "Adoption as an alternative": While adoption is a loving and viable option for some, it is not a realistic solution for every woman facing an unintended pregnancy. Forcing women to carry unwanted pregnancies to term has devastating consequences for their physical and mental health.

* "Protecting the unborn": While the desire to protect potential life is understandable, it cannot come at the expense of the lives and fundamental rights of women.

LD975 is a dangerous, regressive, and unconstitutional bill that will have devastating consequences for women in Maine. I urge you to reject this harmful legislation and uphold the principles of personal liberty, equality, and respect for women's health.

Thank you.