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I support LD 682 which restores safeguards on the abortion process that were removed in LD 1619. LD 682 would return the “mother’s life or health” to the wording of abortions after the point of viability. It would add the diagnosis of fetal anomaly to reduce the deaths of healthy lives. LD 1619 has broadened the abortion window after the age of viability to “when it is necessary in the professional judgment of a physician”. This includes nurse practitioners and physicians’ assistants who are allowed to provide abortions in Maine. The reason could be that it is a financial hardship, or the timing is not good for the mother. It could be that the mother’s quality of life would be diminished. Her mental health could be TEMPORARILY diminished. LD 1619 allows that these are good reasons for killing a fully viable, healthy, possibly full-term human life.

LD 682 also restores the deterrence of anyone who is not licensed for abortions and knowingly provides or assists in the abortion to face the penalty of a Class C crime. Maine has organizations that support mothers through these times. How do I know this? As a retired registered nurse, I volunteer at some of these organizations. Various towns have homes that provide temporary shelter for these mothers, other organizations provide free ultrasounds, parenting, and life classes. The mother can receive free diapers, wipes, clothing, and other items from these agencies. Many mothers believe that when the pregnancy is ended, they will go back to life as if it did not happen. That is not always true. I have met mothers who feel regret when they realized they ended a life and their mental health suffers. Maine also offers counseling for women suffering from these mental health issues, as well as postpartum depression.

Many are aware that Planned Parenthood receives most of their money from federal funds, also known as taxpayer dollars. Maine Care (Medicaid) receives its funding from taxpayers. While I do not wish to increase taxes for Mainers, what if organizations who support the baby and mother’s life received this kind of funding? What if the taxpayer dollars were divided equally? It is too bad that an equal amount of dollars is not allocated to organizations that provide the above-mentioned care. LD 1619’s intent may be to help mothers with an unexpected pregnancy, however, in the long run much harm to the mother and the baby is caused from this law. Will you vote to support the safeguards to be amended in this?