

Michelle Zagardo
Bethel
LD 975

To the judiciary committee, I am writing to express my strong opposition to LD 975, which seeks to repeal the laws authorizing abortion in Maine and redefine "human being" and "person" under the Maine Criminal Code to include all human beings from the moment of conception. This legislation is an extreme and dangerous attempt to criminalize abortion, strip individuals of their reproductive rights, and create far-reaching legal consequences that go beyond abortion access. This bill disregards the fundamental right of individuals to make personal medical decisions free from government interference. Abortion is a deeply personal healthcare decision that should be made by a patient in consultation with their medical provider—not dictated by legislative overreach. The right to abortion is essential to bodily autonomy, gender equality, and reproductive freedom, and its repeal would severely jeopardize the health and well-being of countless Mainers. Additionally, by defining "personhood" as beginning at conception, this bill introduces alarming legal uncertainties that could have devastating consequences. Such a definition could impact access to in vitro fertilization (IVF), miscarriage management, and even routine forms of contraception, though I suspect that is its purpose. This vague and medically unsound redefinition of personhood threatens not just abortion access, but a wide range of reproductive healthcare services that many individuals and families rely on. Furthermore, repealing the crimes of elevated aggravated assault and domestic violence elevated aggravated assault on pregnant persons removes critical protections for victims of violence. What public health benefit could this possibly serve? Pregnant individuals experiencing domestic abuse are particularly vulnerable, and eliminating these legal safeguards places them at even greater risk. It is unconscionable to repeal laws designed to protect victims of violent crime while simultaneously criminalizing reproductive healthcare decisions.

This bill does not promote public health, protect families, or enhance individual rights—it is a dangerous attack on reproductive freedom, personal autonomy, and necessary legal protections for pregnant individuals. I urge you to support policies that prioritize evidence-based healthcare, personal choice, and protections for victims of violence. With gratitude, Michelle Zagardo