

Chelsea Stephens  
Portland  
LD 975

My name is Chelsea Stephens, I'm from Portland Maine, and I'm writing about LD 975- An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion.

I'm a devout christian woman. I'm a mother to a toddler who I prayed for, struggled to conceive, and almost died bringing into the world. From the second I saw that double-line I loved her, and all my hopes and dreams were wrapped up in her. To me, she was very much alive in the womb, every kick or hiccup a miracle. I think that every lost pregnancy and every abortion is, on some level, a tragedy. And I know that this law MUST NOT pass.

I believe we could effectively end abortions, and there are evidence-based ways to do so; comprehensive sex education, access to contraceptives and birth control, increased focus on rape prevention, easily accessible pre and post-natal care, increased research and funding for reducing pregnancy complications, child care, and financial and emotional support within the community for pregnant people. These are all ways the government could end abortions. What the government cannot do is force one person to give up their body in the service of another, even if they believe it would be the right thing to do.

For example; imagine your 7 year old neighbor needs a kidney transplant. Without it, he will die. Through happenstance, you find that you're the only perfect donor. The procedure is not without risk, but you're likely to make a full recovery. Would you do it? I bet you would! And I bet most anyone would agree, that giving up your kidney to save the life of a child would be the morally right thing to do.

But ask yourself; should the government, let's say Governor Mills, have the right to go into medical provider records, decide that someone else needs your kidney more than you, coerce you, use your body, and arrest you if you resist? Even if it's to save the life of a child, should the government have that kind of power? Even if saying no would mean the loss of life for a child, don't you still believe you should have the right to decide?

This isn't about whether or not you believe having an abortion is right, or moral. This isn't even about asking if life begins at conception, or birth, or somewhere in between. This is about whether the government should have the right to force one person to give up their body for another person. That is a total violation of our very most basic human rights. Even in death, people are given the choice to keep or donate their bodies, regardless of how many people die on transplant waitlists. If you want to end abortions, you must ask yourself "why are people having them?"