

Casey Cole
Portland
LD 975

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I'm Casey Cole and I'm testifying against LD 975 An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion. I'm here today as a concerned member of the public that has been trying with my wife to start a family, we are now at the point where we are pursuing In Vitro Fertilization. This bill could end our efforts to become parents and is harmful to everyone trying to start a family in Maine. Not only is this bill an attack on people's civil liberties, but it also jeopardizes IVF and greatly increases the risks of pregnancy in Maine, while doing nothing to actually help the citizens of Maine.

Alabama passed a similar law that defines embryos as people in 2022. Last year, the Alabama Supreme Court found an IVF clinic liable for the accidental destruction of embryos. This caused IVF clinics to stop operating in that state as a result. By labelling embryos as people, this bill will eventually lead to the same outcome. If this passes, my wife and I, along with many other citizens of the state face a future where are denied forming our own family. This helps no one.

Pregnancy is risky, we as a society don't acknowledge that much but it can have a lot of negative outcomes, including death. There have been multiple high-profile cases from multiple states where a mother who planned for and wanted her baby, died during her pregnancy. A study published by the American Journal of Public health showed that states with increased abortion restrictions have an increase in maternal mortality. The Gender Equity Policy Institute released a study showing that Texas had an overall increase of 56% in maternal mortality. How does this benefit anyone in the State of Maine. It's not only mothers that are placed at risk. The John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health released a report on February 13, 2025 citing two studies that looked at the impact of abortion bans on infant mortality. Across the 14 states that have enacted abortion bans, infant mortality rose 5.6%. In cases where infant death was caused by congenital disorders, the mortality rate increased by over 10%. Mothers are forced to carry non-viable fetuses to term and watch them die, who does this benefit?

Additionally, requiring miscarriages to be reported to the state and possibly investigated is abhorrent. Miscarriages happen with a lot of pregnancies and by forcing it to be reported is stigmatizing people who are already suffering. Why are we even considering punishing people for what is possibly one of the worst moments of their life? I don't know how anyone can propose this and justify it.

If the goal of this bill is to reduce abortions, why don't we enact policies that actually achieve that while benefiting the people of Maine? Adequate sexual education, access to prophylactics, and a strong safety net would benefit everyone and reduce the need for abortions. Why aren't we pursuing these instead of criminalizing a private, medical procedure?

LD 975 does nothing to actually help the citizens of Maine and will cause unnumerable issues. That is why I strongly encourage this committee to vote "Ought Not to Pass". Thank you for your time and everything that the Judiciary Committee does for the State of Maine.