

Sarah Andreotta
Gray
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Sarah Andreotta. I had an abortion in May of 2022, about one month before the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade.

This was a wanted pregnancy, but at 12 weeks, my husband and I found out that the fetus had chromosomal abnormalities that would be life-altering for all of us. I chose to terminate at 13.5 weeks. I chose my life, my husband's, my then 2-year old daughter's; I reduced pain and suffering for everyone, including the fetus. I later found out that I very likely would have miscarried had I remained pregnant.

The overwhelming emotion I had at the time, related to this experience, was grateful. Grateful for modern medicine. Grateful for my doctor who talked through my decision with me at extra appointments that she squeezed into her schedule. Grateful for her and her nurse who went above and beyond to schedule my D&C at Maine Medical Center as soon as I made my decision. Grateful I was able to fit into the MMC schedule at all as I did not want to have to face possible protesters at Planned Parenthood. Grateful for the nurses who drove my COVID test directly to the lab so that the turnaround time for results would not delay my surgery. Grateful for the nurse who gave me a barf bag and scrubs when I threw up all over myself from morning sickness, a cruel reminder of what I was losing. Grateful that my doctor and her team did an excellent job and I had very minimal physical pain and discomfort after the procedure. Grateful that I was living in the state of Maine where abortion was protected and allowed up to 24 weeks. Grateful for the incredible support I received from family, friends, and coworkers when I told them what was going on. Grateful I never once felt judged for my decision.

My privilege had never been as apparent as it was through this experience. I know what I lived through was not the norm. I know not everyone experiences the same kind of care, concern, compassion, and support that I had. I am sickened and saddened to think that Maine may be moving in a direction in which care and compassion are no longer welcome to people in similar circumstances to mine. I feel a connection to those who are faced with a decision that no one wants to have to make. I feel their pain, their grief, and also stand by their conviction to choose themselves, just like I did. They deserve that, just like I did.

My daughter is now 5. She has been asking me lately for a baby sister. My husband and I never tried for a baby again after that; I was too scarred, too traumatized to even consider the possibility of having to live through something like that again. I hate that I'm disappointing her, I hate that my dream of two loving sisters was not in the cards for us. Even so, I have never once regretted my decision. It was the right one for me and my family. Someday, when she's much older, I'll tell my daughter about it, and I know she will be proud and understand, because that's the kind of person I'm raising her to be.

Thank you.