



Virtual Spoken Testimony of Catie Kelley, J.D. Policy Counsel, Americans United for Life
In Support of Legislative Document 1930 Submitted to the
Senate Committee on Judiciary May 19, 2025

Good afternoon, my name is Catie Kelley, and I am a Policy Counsel Attorney at Americans United for Life. Today, Americans United for Life urges your support of LD 1930. This bill will allow women who are harmed by violence against their unborn child and families who are harmed by violence against their pregnant family members to receive an opportunity for further justice for the unborn child.

LD 1930 includes unborn children as persons in the Maine Criminal Code for purposes of charging Murder, Manslaughter, and the various forms of Assault and Domestic Violence.

The importance of holding perpetrators more stringently accountable for violence against Maine's pregnant citizens cannot be overstated. Multiple studies have found that pregnant women are significantly more likely to be victims of violence and homicide than nonpregnant women.

One study published in Obstetrics and Gynecology found that between 2018 and 2019, homicide during pregnancy, or within 42 days of the pregnancy ending, exceeded all leading causes of maternal mortality, including infection, hemorrhage, and hypertension, "by more than twofold" each.

In 50.9% of these homicides, the victim was pregnant at the time of her death. This study also found that the rate of homicide of pregnant women was 16% higher than the rate of homicide for nonpregnant women.

Another study published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology found that pregnant victims of violence were 1.6 times more likely to die than nonpregnant female victims, and that pregnant women were 15.9% more likely to experience violence compared to nonpregnant females. According to the Maine Domestic Abuse Homicide Review Panel, between 2020 and 2022, domestic abuse homicides accounted for nearly 49% of Maine's total homicides.



This data is alarming and highlights the need for LD 1930. By including unborn children as persons for purposes of charging homicide and assault, Maine can show that it cares about holding perpetrators accountable and preventing violence against its pregnant citizens. The pregnant women of Maine and their unborn children deserve your protection.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Kelley".

Catie Kelley,
Policy Counsel
Americans United for Life