

MAINE RIGHT TO LIFE

LD 494, HP0311 An Act to Conform State Funding to the Federal Hyde Amendment, Limiting Funding for Some Abortion Services

Support

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee My name is Karen Vachon I am the Executive Director of Maine Right To Life, in Auburn, and a resident of Scarborough I come before you today to speak in Support LD 494

Maine Right to Life is a state affiliate of the National Right To Life Committee We are a non-profit organization founded to protect and uphold the dignity and worth of every human life from conception to natural death by making abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia socially, ethically, and legally unacceptable and to actively promote positive alternatives

We are Pro-Life, Pro-Active, and Pro-Women Our members share a belief that women were created uniquely to fulfill a very important role in mankind Women have a womb They bring new life into the world They are to be honored, respected, and protected The word, "reproductive" means to produce an offspring

After the 1973 Roe v Wade decision, many federal programs, including Medicaid, started paying for elective abortions Congress never voted to authorize abortion funding under these programs Administrators and courts, however, interpreted the language as authorizing and requiring the payment of medical services, including abortion

In the interest of protecting potential life, Congress wanted to promote childbirth, as the more attractive alternative over abortion The distinction between necessary medical services and abortion needed to be clear

Medical procedures are in the interest of saving human life, abortion terminates a human life There is a difference! By 1976, the federal Medicaid program was paying for 300,000 abortions per year, and the numbers were escalating rapidly Representative Henry Hyde (R-IL) proposed an amendment to the Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare Appropriations Act of 1977 prohibiting funds appropriated through the bill from being "used to perform abortions except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term"

Congress responded by attaching a "limitation amendment" to the annual appropriations bill for health and human services Known as the Hyde Amendment, it prohibits the federal reimbursement for abortion, except in cases of rape, incest and the life of the mother This is a "rider" to the annual appropriations bill, which expires, every year, on September 30th Every year, since the initial passage, the Hyde Amendment, has received bipartisan support It is estimated that the Hyde Amendment has saved 2.5 Million lives

Maine is the oldest state in the country, with a median age of 45 We are one of four states in the country that has more deaths/year than births Maine aborts 5.2 babies each day

Policy matters We should be promoting and supporting new life The majority of Maine taxpayers oppose the taxpayer funding of abortion I urge this committee to vote ought to pass on this legislation Maine deserves better

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