



PO Box 7860
Portland, ME 04112
(207) 774-5444
www.aclumaine.org

TESTIMONY OF MEAGAN SWAY, ESQ

Ought Not To Pass

LD 1197 – An Act to Prevent Coerced Abortion

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

May 5, 2023

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, greetings My name is Meagan Sway, and I am policy director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Maine, a statewide organization committed to advancing and preserving civil liberties guaranteed by the Maine and U S Constitutions On behalf of our members, I am here to testify against LD 1197

This legislation is based on a misunderstanding of how medical procedures and informed consent relating to medical procedures work First, patients are already able to change their minds at any point before any medical procedure begins Abortion, as a medical procedure, is no different from other procedures that a patient may decide not to undertake The ability to change one's mind about whether or not to undergo a medical procedure and receive a refund if a person does change their mind, should be the same for all medical procedures Imposing different rules for abortion stigmatizes abortion as a form of health care

The legislation also would compel the Maine Human Rights Commission *and* medical providers to discuss legal concepts such as discrimination with their patients While we support everyone in Maine knowing their rights, this bill approaches a line of asking medical providers to provide legal advice The unauthorized practice of law is a complicated concept that fouls up lawyers themselves, let alone medical providers who have not gone to law school Discussions between patients and their health care providers should center on their health care options, not their legal ones

Because this bill is a solution in search of a problem, we urge you to vote ought not to pass