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**Testimony in Support of LD 1197  
“An Act to Prevent Coerced Abortion”**

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Amy Arata, I am from New Gloucester, and I am pleased to present to LD 1197, “An Act to Prevent Coerced Abortion”

This bill amends the laws governing informed consent to abortion. Prior to an abortion, a patient must be provided various disclosures, orally and in writing and in a language and manner that will be understood by the patient. In light of the many immigrants we are welcoming into Maine from all over the world, it's particularly important that everybody can understand exactly what their rights are. The disclosures include the following:

Number 1: Notice that she has the right to withdraw consent for an abortion at any time before the performance of the abortion and, if so, to receive a refund of any payments made to the health care professional for the performance of the abortion. This part of the bill was inspired by the story told by Missouri Democratic Congresswoman Cori Bush, who repeatedly said “no” during an abortion and was ignored. As a mother, I can imagine many reasons why a woman would change her mind at the last minute. Perhaps she just felt the baby move, and came to the realization that this so-called “fetus” is a separate, precious human being, whose life is valuable, just like your lives are precious and valuable.

Number 2: Before an abortion, she must receive notice that the law prohibits criminal threatening of any person, including a person who refuses to have an abortion. For example, Nicholas and Lola Kampf of North Yarmouth chased their 19-year-old daughter, tied her hands and tried to force her to get an abortion after they found out she was pregnant with a black man's baby.

Number 3: She must be given the telephone number of at least one domestic violence hotline and one sexual assault hotline, and an offer to make referrals to law enforcement agencies and domestic violence and sexual assault support organizations, and an offer to call law enforcement if she feels that she will be unsafe if she refuses to have an abortion. It's a sad fact that some women are threatened with violence for refusing an abortion, and may feel they have no other choice. If this bill passes, she'll know that she has other choices.

Number 4 Information regarding the Maine Human Rights Act's protections against discrimination in employment, education and housing on the basis of pregnancy or familial status and, upon request, educational materials prepared by the Maine Human Rights Commission regarding these protections As a housing provider, I've had prospective tenants tell me that their landlord has told them to move because of having a baby, and I've also had tenants ask me if I would force them to move if they had a baby This is absolutely illegal in Maine, and, again, women shouldn't feel that they have no choice other than abortion in order to keep their jobs, housing, or to pursue an education

Number 5 I am requesting an amendment to the bill to require disclosure of any past injuries or deaths of the abortion provider's patients I was surprised to find that physicians with a history of performing abortions when women died are allowed to practice medicine in Maine I realized this after Dr Shannon L Carr, talked about performing late-term abortions in Maine, after having performed an abortion in New Mexico that resulted in her patient's death Women deserve to know the risks of abortion

Thank you and I'm happy to answer questions

Respectfully,

Amy Arata  
State Representative

from Rep Arata  
LD 1197

## Forced Abortion — Part I

Most involve coercion, which can take many forms

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### Women Blackmailed into Abortion

Homelessness, Employment Discrimination, Solitary Confinement or a Push Down the Stairs

- **Universities Revoke Scholarships of Pregnant Athletes, College Students Felt Pressured to Abort**

Cases of colleges revoking scholarships of student athletes who become pregnant have been reported to the NCAA. For example, University of Memphis and Clemson University students said that they felt pressured to have abortions. A related study, published in the *Journal of Issues In Intercollegiate Athletics*, found that pregnant student-athletes “conceal pregnancy, feel forced into abortion, or lose scholarships because of pregnancy.” The report recommended that colleges publish clear policies about student-athlete pregnancy and help create a safer health environment by advocating for pregnant and parenting student athletes.<sup>01</sup>

| “Why doesn't she just get an abortion? Then she can work.”

- **Actress Fired For Being Pregnant, TV Producer Wonders Why She Didn't “Just Abort”**

An actress won a pregnancy discrimination suit against the producers of the Fox TV show *Melrose Place* after she was fired from the cast because she was pregnant. Her lawsuit alleged that one of the show's producers remarked, “Why doesn't she just go out and get an abortion? Then she can work.”<sup>02</sup>

- **Basketball Coach Accuses School of Firing Her for Refusing to Have an Abortion**

An assistant women's basketball coach won a settlement against the University of California at Berkeley, accusing the head coach of firing her after she refused to quit or to have an abortion. She later gave birth to a son. She sued for sexual discrimination and breach of contract for being forced to choose “between her child and a paycheck.”<sup>03</sup>

- **Homeless Woman Reports Being Denied Shelter Until She Submits to Abortion**

A woman won a \$25,000 settlement from Emergency Shelters, Inc., of Richmond, VA, after she filed a lawsuit charging staff members with coercing her to get an abortion by telling her that the shelter did not provide services for pregnant homeless women. She stated that a staff member drove her to the bank to withdraw money for the abortion, then took her to the abortion clinic.<sup>04</sup>

- **Woman Wins Settlement After Accusing Boss of Coerced Abortion and Threats**

A Minnesota woman won an out-of-court settlement for an undisclosed amount from her employer, Duluth Little Stores, after her boss tried to pressure her to abort. The woman said her boss mistreated her while she was pregnant and threatened to push her down the stairs during her sixth month of pregnancy.<sup>05</sup>

| Boss: “You have a choice to make.”

- **Medic Says She Aborted After Boss Threatened to Fire Her**

Three paramedics accused the Washington, D.C. Assistant Emergency Medical Services Chief of pressuring them into having abortions by telling them they could be fired if they became pregnant their first year on the job. One woman told authorities she aborted despite her beliefs because she was afraid of losing her job. She said she was told “she had a choice to make.” The assistant chief later resigned from her job.<sup>06</sup>

- **Law School Grad Uses Sex Videotape in Attempt to Blackmail Girlfriend into Abortion**

A Florida law school graduate was sentenced for trying to force his ex-girlfriend to have an abortion. He hired

friends to blackmail his girlfriend by threatening to mail copies of a videotape the couple had made of themselves having sex to the woman's family, friends, and employer unless she had the abortion. The woman later gave birth to a girl.<sup>87</sup>

- **Walmart Pays \$220,000 for Rejecting Pregnant Applicant**

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission settled a pregnancy discrimination suit against Walmart for failing to hire a job applicant who was pregnant. According to the lawsuit, the woman told the Assistant Manager that she was pregnant during a job interview and was told to "come back after she had the baby." She filed a complaint after later reading in a magazine that refusing to hire someone because they are pregnant is illegal. According to the EEOC, pregnancy discrimination cases are on the rise and other companies are being investigated for firing and demoting pregnant women.<sup>88</sup>

- **Woman Files Pregnancy Discrimination Lawsuit Against Maternity Clothing Retailer**

Mother's Work, a maternity clothing retailer, settled a pregnancy discrimination lawsuit charging that they fired employees after they became pregnant. One woman, a former district manager, accused the vice-president of firing her during her 37th week of pregnancy after telling her she wouldn't be able to handle her job. The company denied any wrongdoing.<sup>89</sup>

- **Funeral Home Employee Wins Lawsuit Over Coerced Abortion**

A funeral home employee in Florida filed a lawsuit against Fisher-Pou Funeral Home, saying that her supervisor badgered her into an abortion because her baby was biracial. The woman and three other former employees accused a supervisor of pressuring the woman to abort, making financial arrangements and taking her to the abortion. The woman said she was later fired from her job for interracial dating.<sup>90</sup>

- **NutriSystem Settles EEOC Case for Firing Pregnant Employee**

In another EEOC case, NutriSystem, Inc. agreed to pay \$82,500 for a woman who was terminated after becoming pregnant. The woman was fired three weeks after she told her employer that she was pregnant and one month after she had been placed in a leadership training program. According to the EEOC, pregnancy discrimination cases are on the rise and other companies are being investigated for firing and demoting pregnant women.<sup>91</sup>

## Learn More

Citations are listed at the end of this report or online at [www.theunchoice.com/forcedabortioncitations.htm](http://www.theunchoice.com/forcedabortioncitations.htm)

These are only a sampling of the pressures faced by girls and women whose unplanned pregnancies inconvenience others. For more information, visit the [www.TheUnChoice.com](http://www.TheUnChoice.com)