

My name is Ginger Leigh Smith, currently a resident of Lewiston and I'm here to testify in opposition to D 1619. This is difficult, but if not now, then when? I've never said these words out loud.

In the mid-80s when I was in my mid-20s, living in Portland, working hard and trying to get ahead (who am I kidding; I was just trying to get by). I'd voted exclusively democrat and although I didn't really believe in abortion, I'd been convinced that was ok to have that choice. I had a nice boyfriend and was looking forward to getting married and having children of our own ~ one day.

Then, when I unexpectedly got pregnant, all of the plans of "how things should go" went out the window. I was mortified and terrified (there was NO way I could tell my parents), ashamed (I knew sex before marriage wasn't appropriate and could cause harm), and I felt helpless (I wasn't ready to raise a child on my own; I was barely making ends meet for myself). All very real concerns, but none really insurmountable or eternal, but the "choice" I did make was (eternal, that is)...and I have regretted it ever since. It was the wrong choice then, it is now, and we should always choose life. I sure wish I had. I'll never know this side of Heaven what an amazing person my baby might have been or what contributions he or she would have made in this world, however, when I finally do meet him or her, I will be sure to say, "I'm so, SO very sorry that I wasn't brave enough to let you be born."

Next month, I will be 60yo. Many women at my age are enjoying their grandchildren and maybe even great grandchildren. I never married nor had children, so I am alone in this life and have missed out on many of the greatest joys many people know here on earth. And that's not the basis of my testimony as I could imagine my position against this heinous legislation would only be more vociferous and heartfelt if I'd actually had the honor of being a mother.

There are always more reasons TO choose life and very few, if any, valid reasons to end one. This legislation goes way, way too far. The governor broke a promise when she said she had no intention to change the existing law (which is more than adequate despite anecdotal tales to the contrary) and even the large majority of "pro-choice" people I know agree that this is beyond the pale and unacceptable. Killing a viable child is always wrong. There is no valid reason to expand the existing laws. Given the advancement of medical technology, I'm sure most of you know a baby that had a challenge in-utero, was born prematurely, spent time in the NICU and is now a thriving child, maybe even an adult today. Murder IS illegal and these types of late-term abortions are just that ~ the willful, unnecessary, and should be unlawful, murder of a beautiful child.

Please vote to leave the laws as they are and do NOT pass this extreme legislation. We want Maine to be a beacon of light where people enjoy the wonders of our state; not a become destination where killing children is the coming attraction.

Thank you.