

Senator Carney and Representative Moonen, Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Kristen Bifulco and I am a resident of Camden Maine. I am here to testify in opposition to LD1619. I remember when I was pregnant with my first child, the doctor announced to me that the child had a growth on the back of the neck. I remember going home and crying. I was afraid this child would not make it, and afraid, if he made it, what would this growth mean for him? Thankfully, in the end, I delivered a healthy boy. Pregnancy is a roller coaster ride for the mother and everyone around her. In addition to the extreme emotional toll a pregnancy has, there are medical issues for both the mother and child. Representatives, you have a unique job here today. How do you regulate something so complicated? Are you a doctor, a mother, or a lawyer? These titles would help with the complexity of the law. If you are not, I ask you to consider what has already been done in this area for abortion in Maine. We are not here to debate abortion; abortion is already allowed. The existing law was written to consider medical necessity and viability. The overturning of Roe V Wade did not affect the State Of Maine. There is no waiting period for an abortion in the state of Maine, you can order abortion medication online in Maine and some insurances cover abortions. There are even private funds available for those that cannot afford an abortion. Women have a lot of options and those are not being debated. What you are being asked today, is if you think *the people of Maine should allow a mother to abort a viable child outside the necessity of medical conditions*. There are many in this room that are ok with the allowance of abortion for medical necessity. In fact, our laws about legitimate self-defense regarding murder are in line with this. But taking this factor out is unconscionable. Anyone that has carried a child has felt that child kick and turn in their belly. That independent viable being is special and deserves to be protected from an end to his or her life. The idea that a mother could abort a viable life for any reason such as color, sex, or disability is atrocious for society. Maine's slogan might as well be "The way life should be or kill it". I implore you to vote against the new language in this bill. My daughter told me I should not bring my religious beliefs to this forum, but I feel they are important to this discussion. Every life is special, there is hope in this world, you are never alone and be not afraid are some of the teachings of my faith. These teachings are intended to help us make difficult decisions in a time of darkness. I ask you to see life as a gift, be not afraid to make a vote for life, believe there is hope for new mothers and their decisions, and make a vote that lets all our unborn children know they are not alone.