

Senator Carney and Representative Moonen, Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Susan Pritchard and I am a resident of Searsport. I am here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

I believe this bill is bad for the State of Maine because it is discriminatory, promotes fallacies, and sanctions our elected officials to default on their responsibility to our society.

It discriminates against pre-birth children, and I am using the designation “children” consistent with Governor Mill’s own website, in the April 23 news release¹. The fate of the children is in the hands of others, they do not have their own advocates, and their lives are not protected by this law.

In its mechanics, LD 1619 contains dangerous threats to our society. There is no criteria in place for assessing or determining “necessity”, no ethics test to be met. It effectively allows any abortion, as long as the case is convincingly presented. In practice, the decision could come down to “is this child wanted enough?” It is wrong to enact a law that opens that door, that allows anyone’s right to continue living to be determined by whether they are well-enough wanted by someone else.

On her website, Governor Mills suggests that the decision about a late-term abortion should be between “a woman and her doctor – not politicians”.² That’s a cleverly crafted sound bite, but it leaves an important person out of the picture: the child.

It **IS** the role of politicians to advocate for the protection and defense of those in our society who are vulnerable. Any of our elected officials who support this bill on the grounds that the decision to end a child’s life is “private”, are

defaulting on their moral obligation to our society by turning their backs on those who cannot speak for themselves or defend themselves. The damages and the repercussions of such systemic disregard for a segment of the population ought to be very fresh in our minds.

Jane Field, a proponent of this bill, contends that “Abortion is a complex health care ... issue... requiring nuanced medical... discernment...”³, and yet the legal penalties which should serve as safeguards to ensure qualified medical care, have been specifically removed in LD 1619⁴. This not *health care*, and it is a fallacy to claim it as such and to say it represents genuine concern for the mother.

Thank you for listening to my concerns regarding this very dangerous bill.

1. Broad Coalition Strongly Endorses Legislation Empowering Women & Doctors to Make Reproductive Health Care Decisions | Office of Governor Janet T. Mills (maine.gov), re Dana Pierce
2. Broad Coalition Strongly Endorses Legislation Empowering Women & Doctors to Make Reproductive Health Care Decisions | Office of Governor Janet T. Mills (maine.gov)
3. Broad Coalition Strongly Endorses Legislation Empowering Women & Doctors to Make Reproductive Health Care Decisions | Office of Governor Janet T. Mills (maine.gov)
4. LD-1619
<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=HP1044&item=1&snum=131>