

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Justin Frank and I am a resident of Augusta. I am here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

My wife and I are foster and adoptive parents and our youngest son came into our care after he was born addicted to narcotics. Though he continues to have some affects, today he is a happy and healthy and VERY active 5 year old who just started little league last week.

His entrance into our family gave us the chance to witness first-hand the best of what we can do in caring for the vulnerable – in this case our son and his birth mother. We saw doctors and nurses who fought for our son's life; who cradled and rocked him when he was inconsolable for hours; who stood in the hallway and applauded as he left the hospital after 6 full weeks of care.

We witnessed doctors and nurses who cared for his birth mother and helped her care for her baby for the first two weeks of his life; DHHS workers and counselors and clinicians who offered help, checked in, and fought for her recovery. Although the system is not perfect, the goal of valuing EVERY life, and fighting to bring hope and help to tragic situations is noble and heroic and good. It represents some of the best of our community – this care for ALL life.

My wife and I oppose LD 1619 because it is an extreme bill that heads in the opposite direction. Current law already addresses medical necessity to protect the life of the mother. LD 1619 says that in addition to medical necessity, ALL protections for the child in the womb must be removed. Rather than valuing and fighting for the lives of mothers AND children, it removes all legal protection for these vulnerable and voiceless AND VIABLE lives in the womb. Rather than fighting to bring hope and help for ALL who find themselves in tragic situations, LD 1619 says that the child has no rights and no value before the law, and her or his life can be ended for any and every reason.

Please oppose this unnecessary and extreme bill. We can and we must create and strengthen a culture that fights for ALL the vulnerable, and values ALL life. Thank you.