

Testimony In Opposition to LD1619

2023-05-01

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

Along the side of the road or in many other places we see signs that encourage us to “be kind” or “be nice”. It is easy for all of us to agree that we want our society to be kind. But if we’re honest we’ll admit that true kindness requires more than trite sayings. A wise man once said, “the true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members”.

Recently a friend of our family went through a difficult pregnancy and gave birth prematurely at 34 weeks to a son. He is a wonderful addition to their family and has brought them a lot of joy. No one would dispute that he is his own unique person, even though he needs help with everything right now. Because a premature baby is a person, we are talking about life and death. How as a society are we going to protect our most vulnerable?

I am here to express opposition to LD 1619 because it removes the viability protection for premature babies. If an unborn baby is already deceased due to a health issue, we already know that this is not viability and is already covered under current Maine law. The people of Maine do not support this proposed change to the current law. Prior to the recent gubernatorial election, during the debate, both Democrat and Republican candidates stated that they opposed removing the viability protection. Despite many viewpoints on this issue, viability is something that is easy for all of us to agree on. I urge you to vote “ought not to pass” on this bill.

Thank you.