

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

I am Stephen Heathcote of Holden of Holden, Maine. I am here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

I am a grandfather of 10 beautiful grandchildren. I speak to you now of one grandson, currently a bright, well-adjusted, and talented 12-year-old boy.

When he was 21 weeks in the womb, he was diagnosed with spina bifida. The doctor offered to end the pregnancy with a surgical abortion. The hospital pediatrician read the ultrasound, could not see a brain connection, and predicted he would be blind and a virtual vegetable. On the other hand, the pediatric neurologist (bless his heart) weighed in and said these profound words: "Probably everyone has something abnormal about their brains, and they just don't know it, because they learn to compensate. Let's wait and see."

Today my grandson is a smart, kind, middle child in a family of 6 boys and one girl. He loves chemistry, building Legos, reading, and wrestling. According to his mother, he wants to grow up to be a medical researcher and work on ways to fix damaged nervous systems. He will be an overcomer because the doctors, who did not know everything, did not call the shots.

My grandson does not know these details. But he would want others to have the same chance he did – a chance to have a life, to be prayed for, to be healed, and to someday heal others. God is gracious. Don't take what God has made and despise it.

Please do not turn Maine into an abortion mecca where people from all over the world come to have their full-term, unrestricted abortions. Do not turn "Vacationland" into "Abortionland." Abortion is NOT "the way life should be." This is a bill the Mainers do not want. Please represent the majority, the people in Maine who do not support LD 1619 or it's add-ons.

Thank you.