

June Hartman, Brunswick
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LD #: 1619, An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws

Governor Janet Mills, House speaker Rachel Talbot Ross, Senate President Troy Jackson, and Distinguished Members of the Committee on Judiciary,

My name is June Hartman, and I'm a current Bowdoin student, originally from Seattle Washington. I'm here as a member of the Bowdoin Reproductive Justice Coalition, and I'm writing in support of LD # 1619.

When I was choosing a college to attend, I paid close attention to the abortion laws in each region — if the state was anti-choice, the college was off my list. Being able to trust that I would have access to vital medical procedures was essential in my choosing to come to Maine. Through this bill, the state of Maine can continue to show that we are a state safe for women to live and thrive in, not a state to be avoided because of restrictive laws.

The main reason I support LD 1619 is that it removes the current gestational ban. By removing our gestational ban, Maine can remove barriers to essential care for women. No woman I know would terminate a 24-week pregnancy lightly or without cause. People having abortions past viability often planned to carry out their pregnancies, and while I believe that someone's reasoning for obtaining an abortion is none of my business, it's important to recognize that these are extremely hard and heartbreaking choices. The discussion of these choices belongs between a doctor and patient, not in this chamber.

If I were faced with a difficult diagnosis and choice late in a pregnancy, the last thing I would want to do would be to worry about how I would travel out-of-state to get an abortion. As a college student without access to reliable transportation, I would have a hard time getting to my local care center, let alone one hundreds of miles away. We need to support women and families through the hardest moments in their lives, not force them to spend thousands of dollars they don't have to leave our state for care. Maine should be focused on how to encourage young people to continue to live and work here, not how to drive them away.

I trust Maine women and doctors to make the right choices, and I want to respect women's agency — not force them to make hard choices outside of our state. As a young person who hopes to live, work, and vote in this state for decades to come, I urge you to pass LD #1619.