
Abigail Martin, 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 Abigail Martin, and I am from Brunswick, Maine representing the Bowdoin College Reproductive Justice Coalition. I am writing in support of the bill LD 1619, An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws.

This bill enables non-medical providers to assist in terminating a pregnancy without criminalization, removes the gestational ban that prohibits terminations beyond 24 weeks, and updates data collection to ensure the privacy of those seeking an abortion. As a leader of the Reproductive Justice Coalition at Bowdoin College, I want to ensure that my fellow students have trusted avenues for seeking abortions. It should not be a criminal act to assist those who want a safe, self-managed abortion. Students should have a right to make decisions based on their needs and have safe methods of receiving abortion care.

According to a study by the University of Colorado Boulder, a blanket ban on abortion in the United States would lead to a 21% increase of pregnancy-related deaths overall. We cannot continue to place restrictions on accessing abortion assistance, as this will perpetuate unsafe practices to terminate pregnancies. Young adults who become pregnant are more likely to drop out of school, receive inadequate prenatal care, and develop mental health issues.

Women risk health complications and immense mental stress from an unexpected pregnancy, particularly if it's unwanted. Being a student, I know how difficult it is to try to be successful in college and being pregnant would place even more stress in my life at this time. We should be understanding of women who believe being pregnant is not the right decision and allow women to make the decision they believe is best for themselves and their future.

As a college student who wants to uphold bodily autonomy and the safety of my fellow students when accessing abortions, I urge you to vote for LD 1619. Thank you.