

Ellen Salovaara, Baltimore

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LD 1619, An Act To Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws

Governor Janet Mills, House Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross  
~~Senator Carney, Representative Moonen~~ and Distinguished Members of the Committee on  
Judiciary,

My name is Ellen Salovaara, and I'm from Baltimore, Maryland. I'm a student at Bowdoin College, and I am representing the Bowdoin Reproductive Justice Coalition. I'm writing for LD 1619, An Act To Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws.

I support this bill because the gestational ban on abortions harms pregnant people. Gestational bans do not provide clear deadlines: pregnancy dating and gestational limits are often estimates. Therefore, while gestational bans seem to provide black and white boundaries, they are a point of contention and are likely to create debate over when pregnant people can receive abortion care, prolonging their time without it. Pregnant people may face barriers to receiving care within the time limit provided by gestational bans. For instance, they may face economic or logistical barriers if they are traveling to Maine to receive abortion care from states with abortion bans. Pregnant people traveling within Maine may also face economic and logistical barriers. They may not make it in time, rendering gestational bans dangerous. Pregnant people may learn new information in later trimesters that would make them want to terminate their pregnancy for the fetus' safety or for their safety. Regardless of the reason, pregnant people should not have to face bureaucratic tape when making a time sensitive decision: the decision should be between them and their medical care provider.

I have loved attending Bowdoin, and I have mostly felt safe and comfortable in a state that, for the most part, allows me and my friends to easily access abortions should we need them. A legislative timeline makes an unwanted pregnancy even more stressful. If one of my friends were to have an unwanted pregnancy and not be able to quickly access care, they would have to leave their studies and travel out of state, placing unnecessary economic burdens on them. I want to ensure that everyone feels safe and comfortable here and like their needs and health are put first. Therefore, I urge you to vote to pass LD #1619.