



Grandmothers For Reproductive Rights

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Senator Anne Carney, Representative Matt Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Lucy Hull, and I am a staff member with Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights (GRR!), an education and advocacy organization dedicated to advancing reproductive health, rights and justice for present and future generations. I'm testifying on behalf of GRR! in support of **LD 1619: An Act to Improve Maine's Reproductive Privacy Laws**.

GRR! wholeheartedly supports all changes proposed in LD 1619. My testimony focuses on the removal of criminal penalties. As elders who survived the days before Roe—and *many did not survive*—we remember vividly the fear and desperation of seeking abortions from strangers, in secrecy, and not knowing if we'd come out alive. The innovation of medication abortion offered a safe and private option for people to end pregnancies, both in and beyond clinical settings. Millions of people in the United States have safely used these pills¹.

Assisting someone who is self-managing their abortion is *medically* safe, but legally risky under current Maine law. The existing criminal statute could be used, for example, to prosecute someone who supplies abortion pills to a friend in need. We should not criminalize support, and there are sufficient laws on the books to prosecute someone who performs a procedural abortion without appropriate licensure. We do not need to add to the criminal code.

Abortion pills offer safety, discretion and autonomy. Abortion—including self-managed abortion with pills—is incredibly safe. Criminalization increases the likelihood of bad actors exploiting desperate pregnant people. Present and future generations of abortion seekers should not be terrorized with misinformation about a process that is not only safe, but also a human right we have collectively fought for across more than five decades.

Opponents of LD 1619 are raising concerns about “back alley abortions” in order to frighten lawmakers and the public into ignoring decades of medical evidence showing the safety and efficacy of abortion pills. We who remember the terrible pre-Roe days will not have our own history leveraged against future generations of young people.

GRR!s want pregnant Mainers to feel supported and safe, and LD 1619 moves us toward that goal. GRR! urges the committee to vote in support of LD 1619.

Thank you for your consideration,
Lucy Hull & GRR!s across Maine

¹ <https://www.guttmacher.org/article/2022/02/medication-abortion-now-accounts-more-half-all-us-abortions>