

Senator Carney and Representative Moonen, Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Joel Furrow and I am a resident of Wales, ME. I am here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

Governor Mills has used the word "compassion" to describe LD1619, a bill that will create late term abortion in Maine, up to the moment of birth. If she's successful, Maine will join just 6 other states to allow late term abortion of viable pregnancies.

With the exception of life endangerment of the mother, current Maine law prohibits abortion access after an unborn baby is considered viable (at or about 24 weeks), recognizing the value and life of the unborn at this developmental stage. This is built on a widely held consensus that life begins at the point of "viability." Many - including me - hold that life begins much earlier but the overwhelming majority of Americans believe that a viable unborn human does in fact constitute "life." This is obvious to anyone who has viewed a third trimester ultrasound or held a baby born pre-maturely. Each of us - including Governor Mills - must know this to be true.

My wife and I welcomed a baby boy last summer. Due to some concerns from our health providers, an ultrasound was needed the day before he was born. There he was on the screen, fully formed and developed. We watched him respond to us with kicks and his body jump with hiccups. Just hours later, he was in our arms.

There is very little developmental difference between a late term, unborn baby and a new born. Each is solely dependent on the mother, literally providing the nutrition to thrive and grow. Each is fragile, beautiful, intricately designed and bursting with life. We rightly call this a miracle.

Each of us would immediately see the injustice of intentionally causing harm to a newborn baby. Homicide of an infant seems unfathomable. Yet the Governor and proponents of LD1619 would allow the life of the same baby to be destroyed, if yet to have breathed outside the womb- when they cannot be seen and cries cannot be heard, though pain fully felt, a heartbeat stopped, a life destroyed.

It's not at all surprising then, that the Governor and proponents of LD1619 represent the minority of Americans. According to Pew Research, 73% of American adults are opposed to late-term abortion ([SOURCE](#)). This opinion crosses all political lines, including pro-life and pro-choice perspectives, clearly demonstrating that there is a moral line here that we don't want to cross.

Proponents of LD1619 also claim that the aim of LD1619 is to provide abortion for rare and heartbreaking situations when a late term pregnancy is no longer viable and will make up less than 1% of all abortions. No doubt, compassion and care is necessary in these settings, but a deeper look at the data reveals that the impact of LD1619 will go far beyond these tragic cases. New Mexico is one of only 6 states that allow the kind of late-term abolition that LD 1619 would create in Maine. In 2019, state health authorities in New Mexico reported to the CDC that late term abortions made up 12% of all abortions in the previous year ([SOURCE](#)).

Governor Mills and advocates of this bill have claimed LD 1619 is an act of "compassion." The word "compassion" is defined as "sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings of others."

Don't look away from this cruel truth: LD 1619 will cause suffering of the most defenseless among us and ultimately destroy the life of unborn, viable, human babies. How can this act be considered "compassionate"? We must all consider LD 1619 to be an extreme injustice for the viable, human lives that it will ultimately destroy.

It is the privilege and responsibility of each mother and father to care for and raise that baby human life - born and unborn. Should that not be possible, it is the privilege and responsibility of our community to care for and raise that child - not to destroy it. Let's choose to be a state that values life for all.

I implore you to vote "ought not to pass" on LD 1619.

Thank you for your consideration and service.

Submitted by Joel Furrow, 38 Collins Rd, Wales ME 04280.  
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