

Honorable members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Lori Smith and I live in Wellington with my husband and five children. I am testifying today in opposition of LD1619, regarding late term abortion.

On behalf of my children and Maine residents who stand with the US constitution and the right to life I say that this right is not negotiable. When we respect life, we honor our posterity. While three of my own children were born prematurely, one was at special risk. During pregnancy I struggled through Cholestasis which develops in the third trimester and can result in the death of the child. Although he was at high risk, removing him from the womb in the natural process of childbirth enabled him to be born perfectly healthy. At 36 weeks gestation, under this new law, he could have been killed by me as an inconvenience.

Regardless of your personal beliefs on abortion and its practices, there are a number of reasons why this bill should be opposed. It is unnecessary. It is dangerous. It is not what the Maine people want.

First, it is unnecessary. Currently, the Maine law allows for abortions for medical necessity and viability. Early term abortions are legal in Maine. Abortions to save the mother's life are legal, and abortions for stillbirth are legal. With all of these medical conditions addressed in the current law, this drastic late term abortion law is completely unnecessary.

Second, it is dangerous. As with all medical procedures, abortion is dangerous. Medical professionals undergo years of training to offer safe medical care to Maine citizens. Weighing the risks of pregnancy to the mother and child, the later an abortion is performed the more dangerous the procedure is for the mother. The safest way to end a late term pregnancy is through childbirth.

Finally, it isn't what the Maine people want. When Gov. Mills ran for reelection she promised not to support the extension of abortion services in Maine, yet, here we are. Over 65% of Maine citizens do not support this dangerous, unnecessary bill. Mainers agree that on-demand abortion, especially when the child is fully formed, is too extreme. This bill is not supported by the Maine people.

Please consider seriously your impact on Maine and oppose this extreme bill. Thank you.