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Senator Carney, Representative Mooney, Honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, My name is Melanie Blair from Lisbon. I am here to testify against LD 1619.

To begin with, I am against this bill because medically necessary abortions are already covered by Maine state law. Maine Law presently provides exception to the viability restriction to save the life or health of the mother or in the case of a fetal fatal diagnosis. With the vast advancements in medical science, we now know that at the moment of fertilization, a new unique human embryo with unique DNA is created. We now know that even at the early stage an individual human life exists. We now know that the unborn baby's heart begins to beat at three weeks old, that the brain waves can be detected as early as five weeks, and that all of the unborn babies organs are fully formed by 24 weeks. As well, fetal medicine now makes it possible for unborn babies to survive outside the womb as early as 22 weeks. We also know that unborn babies can feel pain at a point in the pregnancy when the most gruesome abortion procedures are still legal in other states. And lastly, advancements in medical practices even allow doctors to operate on a fetus in the womb. So how can one justify a painful death to a child when other humane options are available, so long as there is no medical risk to the mother?

Personally, I can testify to you that I have experienced an unplanned pregnancy, to which I was six months into my pregnancy upon discovery. This was an extremely difficult time in my life, and some well-intended people very close to me recommended I go out of state for a late term abortion. I did not, and though there were a couple of difficult years initially, this child has brought an immense amount of joy and blessing to my life as well as everyone they come in contact with. I cannot imagine not having this child in my life. As an adult now, this child has a heart of gold and of service and compassion for others that is unmet by most, is driven to a life of success while including and lifting others up. If I had made the selfish- not medically necessary decision to abort, the world would certainly be missing out.

If this extreme, unnecessary law is passed, I cannot imagine the loss of life our great state would experience. I ask you to recognize that all life has value, even if not planned or prepared for, and vote AGAINST this bill.