

Testimony Opposing LD 1619
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American Association of Medical Ethics
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Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Dr Danae Kershner. I am a physician trained in family medicine, residing in Stockton Springs, and representing the American Association of Medical Ethics, and I am here to testify in opposition to LD 1619. During my professional career I have had the privilege of delivering hundreds of babies. These are usually moments of joy with eager arms to welcome these tiny bundles. However, I have also known pregnant women who have faced much hardship while carrying their unborn babies. In both situations, these are precious valuable children, worthy of our protection and care.

During a woman's labor, an unborn baby's well-being is monitored through heart rate. Many a time I have touched the top of a baby's head during labor and seen the heart rate jump in response to my touch. These little ones are truly connected to the world outside the womb. They feel touch. They feel pain. LD 1619 would allow ending of these lives by induction of labor without life sustaining care, or dismemberment of a baby's body, or lethal injection as if a child being alive makes him or her a criminal.

Furthermore, there are no ethical guidelines for late term abortion in this bill, except as "necessary in the professional judgment of a physician". I am a physician. My colleagues and I operate based on best practices, and moral obligation. But physicians are human, and prone to error and poor judgment just like anyone else. We need parameters in which to operate in the best interest of public safety. LD 1619 provides none of this.

In my work abroad, I had the grievous experience of witnessing a baby boy born at about 28 weeks whose limp little body was tossed into a bucket after an induced late term abortion. The decision to end her child's life solved nothing for his poor, weeping mother. One life was broken, while one life was lost. Please, do not let this happen to the precious children of our state. Please vote, "ought not to pass", on LD 1619, LD 776, and LD 1343.

Thank you.