

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

It is an accepted fact that babies born several weeks before full term can survive and thrive. My own granddaughter was born at thirty-seven weeks, needed no oxygen, and is a healthy happy six month old. I can not imagine anyone purposefully ending her life.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with abortion, our current bill allows for a woman to “choose” up to 24 weeks, and provides for later intervention should her health be at risk or her baby cease to live.

A civilized society should respect life and care for those that are unable to care for themselves. Our responsibility is to encourage, teach and support our young, and to help them grow into mature individuals. By 24 weeks, a woman who is pregnant must learn to take into consideration the well being of her unborn child. Fear and uncertainty are natural, but that shouldn't necessitate and validate ending the pregnancy. What can we do as a society to support them both?

If a child is born, released from the hospital and days later found dead through violence or neglect, we are horrified! How is late term abortion different? In some manner, it is worse because the professionals who have trained to do all they can to support life, have actively participated in that child's death.

One might say that it is a woman's right to choose - at any time during her pregnancy - and all responsibility for that decision lies on her shoulders. I disagree and say that if we, as a society, allow for late term abortion, the death of all late term babies rests on our collective shoulders. You have the unique power to vote for or against LD 1619. With power comes responsibility.

Please vote ought not to pass.