

LD 1619

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

24 years ago, my parents were advised to consider their options because their baby was at significant risk for Down syndrome. In 1999, this was reason enough to stop my beating heart.

They were wrong about me. They would have ended the life of a typical, healthy baby girl. I urge anyone in this room to look me in the eye and tell me my life is worthless.

We're here to decide if a difference of *hours* affords a **fully independent person** the right to life - a core principle this country was founded on. Is it not illegal to murder the dependent elderly? Have we not rallied for and funded positive change for special needs children?

It has been said that this decision ought not to lie with politicians, but with women and healthcare professionals. I am both. I stand before you as a female clinician who has faithfully served those in this community **dependent** upon my care to walk, to eat, even to breathe - in a state where the abdication of my responsibility is punishable by law. I stand before you as a **survivor** in a generation already missing over a quarter of its peers due to abortion. I beg of you - do not shed more of our blood.

Whatever your persuasion on this matter, I urge you to watch how a child struggles against these weapons - and they are weapons - that literally tear them limb from limb. I assure you, it is not a sight you will soon forget. Protect women from this emotional and even physical scarring. Protect women from medically dangerous abortions that this bill proposes to decriminalize. Protect me, and the millions of other little girls and boys with stories just like mine whose ability to tell theirs one day hinges on what you decide about this bill. I know that I speak for myself, for my church, and for many others when I say we are not just pro-birth. We are ready and willing to support and love on women in crisis. There is a way that is just and loving towards women, and this is not it.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration of my testimony today.