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Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Stephen Cates, and I'm a resident South China. I'm here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

Forty-eight years ago, I found out my girlfriend was six months pregnant. When she went for an examination the doctor was visibly shaken when he found out she was seeking an abortion. He told her that anything beyond first trimester abortions in Maine were illegal. I called a cousin in White Plains, NY and talked to his wife about our situation. Whereas abortions were legal in New York, she made arrangements with a doctor to take care of "the problem". I still needed a vehicle to get to New York, so I asked my parents to use their car. When they wanted to know why, I told them. My father challenged me as to why I was seeking an abortion. He pointed out the only reason I was doing this was because of what people might think. I realized he was right. When I told Emily, she burst into tears. I felt shaken when I realized what I had been trying to force her to do.

We were married February 9. Our daughter Charlotte was born May 3. Thirty-nine years later, Charlotte married her husband Joel, a mechanical engineer for GE. During one of our visits to our daughters home, I was playing with their first child, Josiah on the kitchen floor. I had little block letters which he read off to me. He was 18 months old at this time. My daughter Charlotte said to me, "Dad, come see. Josiah can read". She and her husband, Joel, lifted Josiah onto their laps into an easy chair. They pulled out a Bible and Josiah started reading as effectively as a fourth grader. When he got to a word, he had not seen before, he sounded it out, but he could read proficiently. The next child in line, his sister, was much slower, as she did not read until she was 2 1/2. Someone might take exception with our situation; children that were smart, because they had smart parents. Actually, they had discovered a software that when used with babies at the earliest age, familiarized them with the letters and sounds, and enables them to read at incredibly early ages.

So many children that are in the womb and deemed unnecessary or inconvenient have every chance in the world to develop into "useful" human beings. The one difference that makes a paradigm shift in one's life is the world outlook. When people have a world outlook that categorizes human beings as inconvenient, and embrace wholesale genocide, there is an entire life deprivation that is robbed not only in the loss of the child, but spiritually with anguish that torments for years.

Friends of mine borrowed my car to get an abortion out of state. They were married a few years later, but were subsequently divorced. The wife commented to me that it was the abortion that destroyed their marriage. This was a heartbreaking reminder of what our family heritage was delivered from. It is important to always choose life.

Please vote ought not to pass.