

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

My name is Ben Smith and I'm a resident of New Sharon. I'm here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

Potential, a word like many others, can mean different things depending on the context. Potential can be equated with hope, possibility, expectation, or the mirror images of despair, destruction, or the loss of dreams. Sometimes it's both.

As a small family dairy farmer, work was a given, faith a necessity, and limited resources a continuous obstacle. We were 10 years into our marriage in 2002, before we felt we could afford to add children into the mix. This is where the 'potentials' context began to change for us. My wife decided to risk her own life, rather than abort the life to our 24-week-old son to potentially save hers.

Fast forward to the present. Most who know our son would not guess how difficult his first 5 years of life were as my wife just shared. He is now 20 years old, working full time, has a class A driver's license and is making his way through life.

The point of all this is: We are pro-life and believe life has potential. How that potential plays out is in Hands much greater than ours.

This proposed legislation, LD1619, is no less than man believing he can play God. How could we ever support the throwing away of potential life? Worse than that, these lives are being purposefully destroyed for the sake of convenience.

I do not think abortion should be banned across the board, but it cannot be allowed to be without limits. We have currently, lines drawn at compromise, not perfectly, but workable from both sides. Let's leave it alone.

Legislators are always listed with a letter and town designation. They don't represent towns, they represent people! We are some of those people! Who speaks for us?

We have committed everything we have to play the hand we've been dealt, why should I be told that I will be taxed to cover the cost for someone who just wants out of the game? If you want tax funded abortion, give us tax funded adoption.

The lawmakers of this state are going to vote based on the potential outcome as they see it. I pray you see potential for hope and possibility, and turn as far as possible from this culture of death and destruction for our children's sake and our future's sake.

I will close with what God told the prophet Jeremiah that was true then and is true today. "I know the plans I have for you" says the Lord, "Plans for good and not harm." Plans to give you a future and a hope."

God sees potential; potential for good. Let's leave it in His hands. Vote no on LD1619.

