

Senator Carney and Representative Moonen, Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Kierstin O'Brien and I am a resident of Glenburn. I am here to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

My story is one that I think may be less heard here today, and I am privileged and blessed to share it with you. I'm here today as a survivor of abortion. Not in the way that my mother chose abortion and I survived the process, but rather in the way that my situation has always been a long-held acceptable reason for abortion. It was offered, encouraged, and acceptable for my mother to choose to end my life. She had not been a willing participant in my conception, so it was no fault of her own that landed her 18 and pregnant during her senior year of high school. I stand here today just as human, just as alive today as I was the day she discovered she was pregnant, carrying the same DNA now as I did then, and the same heartbeat now as I did then. I stand here today because she knew I had the same value then as I do now, just as every person here today has value, and she bravely chose life for me.

Abortion rights in Maine already allow for medical necessity under current law. After the age of viability, there is no medical necessity for abortion to be an option. So, "performing an abortion after viability of the fetus when it was not necessary for the preservation of the life or health of the mother.", as LD 1619 states, should be a non-issue. That individual human life inside the mother deserves as much protection and provision for life as the mother does. If the baby can survive outside the womb, it needs to be given the chance to do just that. If the mother can no longer medically carry the child, then the child should be delivered and fought for alongside the mother. That child deserves the chance. Just as each person here has been given that chance. Just as my mother bravely gave me that chance.

Thank you for your time.