

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

Abortion is a decision about competing human rights: the right not to be pregnant and the right not to be killed. As a father of six I know all too well that many challenges and difficulties come along with pregnancy, but when it comes to these competing rights the right to life outweighs the right to avoid suffering, difficulty and privation.

I concede that I am such a person as stands opposed to abortion at ANY time, and for ANY reason, but I am not here to speak in opposition to existing abortion laws. I understand that arguments for a complete ban of abortion have not carried the day and will not carry the day here in Maine. However, this bill represents an extreme and unconscionable expansion of an already divisive practice. It disturbs an uneasy peace between conflicting passions within the electorate. This bill would allow a baby that could survive outside the womb to be killed and it is intellectually incoherent and inconsistent that a viable child could be aborted in one room and down the hall a baby born prematurely is loved and nurtured. We are discussing not potential lives, but rather lives with potential. I assume your conscience would recoil from the idea of a baby that was born prematurely being dismembered outside of the womb, why are you at peace with the same being practiced inside the womb?

We all know that if the people of Maine watched the repeated termination of viable fetuses on television or even if they were subjected to a truthful documentation of all that goes into such a procedure that public sentiment would shift dramatically. Nobody could successfully defend such barbarity in the public presence of the act of itself. And what must be done in the dark should not be done at all.

To our elected representatives, please reflect on what constitutes the right use of power. You have been given authority by the people to wield it with justice on behalf of those who are weak. You have been given a voice to speak for those who have none. There is no group of Mainers so weak and voiceless as the unborn, and if you do not stand up for them you will forfeit all moral authority with this voter.

Thank you for your time.