

Honorable legislators and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary representing the voices of all the people of Maine, thank you for your service. My name is Troy Nelson and I am a resident of Palermo. I am here today to testify in opposition to LD 1619.

I testify today because many residents of Maine understand life as a gift of inestimable value. In fact, the cherished values of our forefathers are enshrined in the words of our Declaration of Independence, that certain rights are "inalienable," that is, incapable of being surrendered, namely, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

While most Americans would agree in upholding these basic values at any cost, the interpretation of things which should be clear have become reduced to a war of words and their meanings. I am aware that to some, the life in the womb before birth is not considered to be a human being. For those with this belief, I respect your right to the difference of opinion which you currently hold. However I would simply ask that you bring your conclusion about what presently defines a human being under the same standard that you would hold to a person at the end of life. Please ask yourself, why does our society cherish the emergency use of cardiac defibrillators and CPR and lifesaving emergency surgeries? For individuals whose bodies have medically expired, our society tries so hard to restore life that could be lost; why would we not value every effort to restore life that could be lost in the normal process of giving birth?

Furthermore, if a baby is left abandoned on a sidewalk, we gasp in horror at such neglect, as we should, and criminal charges are brought forth. Is such a distinction between a baby who has been born, and an eight or nine month old baby in the womb worth deliberating, merely because the birth process has or has not yet occurred?

This bill would allow late-term abortions. Do you know that the Mayo Clinic website states that in the second trimester, the biological sex of the baby becomes apparent? The baby has functioning organs, nerves, and muscles. The baby can suck his or her thumb, and ridges form which will become that individual's unique fingerprints. Pulsating heart tissue registering as heartbeats begin way back into the first trimester at week 5 or week 6. This bill would disregard obvious signs of life.

I submit to you that the only reason why anyone could find it acceptable that a baby is aborted, while an adult is given life-saving care, is that the individual in the womb is not yet known. If we cannot support the right to life at every opportunity, why bother with liberty itself, or the pursuit of happiness? I speak for myself, and I speak for the unborn voices in the state of Maine who cannot speak for themselves.

Thank you for your consideration.