

Testimony of Emmeline Beal
Against LD 535
An Act to Increase Access to Necessary Medical Care for Certain Minors
and LD 1735
An Act to Safeguard Gender-affirming Health Care

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

My name is Emmeline Beal of Cherryfield, and I am testifying in opposition to LD 535 and LD 1735 because I believe they displease the Creator and endanger children and families

In 1620, just over four hundred years ago, the Pilgrims came to New England. But why? What compelled them to leave everything they had known and start over in a new land? Actually, they did it twice. In 1607 and 1608 they fled England because of religious persecution. They moved to the Netherlands, where they could serve God freely according to their conscience, guided by the Bible. Over time, however, it became clear that living there was not a permanent solution. In his book *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Governor William Bradford wrote an eyewitness account of their experiences, including the reasons they left the Netherlands.

I would like to share with you one of his reasons: "But still more lamentable, and of all sorrows most heavy to be borne, was that many of the children, influenced by these conditions [of economic hardship], and the great licentiousness of the young people of the country, and the many temptations of the city, were led by evil example into dangerous courses, getting the reins off their necks and leaving their parents. Some became soldiers, others embarked upon voyages by sea and others upon worse courses tending to dissoluteness and the danger of their souls, to the great grief of the parents and the dishonour of God. So they saw their posterity would be in danger to degenerate and become corrupt." ¹

Due to this and several other causes, the Pilgrims prepared to set out for the New World. During their sixty-six-day crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, they endured cramped quarters, seasickness, mockery from the sailors, and lack of fresh water. Their first winter in Plymouth was one of hunger, rampant illness, and painful loss; approximately half of them died. Yet those left behind persevered for the sake of their Lord and for the sake of posterity. I wonder, if William Bradford were alive today and knew that these bills were being proposed in the very New England he and his fellow Pilgrims sacrificed to build, what would he say?

¹ Quoted from Chapter IV *Of Plymouth Plantation: Bradford's History of the Plymouth Settlement, 1608-1650*, Original Manuscript Rendered into Modern English by Harold Paget, 1909