

January 22nd, 2024

Senator Anne Carney, Representative Matt Moonen, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Stephanie Bobak and I am a resident of Waterboro. I'm testifying in support of **LD 780, RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Protect Personal Reproductive Autonomy.**

When I was sixteen in 1976, I got pregnant. I was terrified because I was living in an extremely dysfunctional home with strict religious upbringing. I went to a Planned Parenthood clinic to take a pregnancy test, not knowing anything about reproduction or birth control. The staff at Planned Parenthood were so supportive, kind, and non-judgmental. My plan was to have an abortion, but my mother found out, and because abortion was considered a sin, she decided for me that I would go through the pregnancy and place the child for adoption. The ensuing years were filled with grief and confusion. I longed for the connection with the child that had been taken from me. Thirty-three years later, I was able to finally connect. I'm grateful for organizations like Planned Parenthood because if it were not for them, I would have gone through the ordeal alone. I was able to talk to a counselor and she didn't tell me what to do. She just offered support. It's imperative for women to have a place to go to reason things through without manipulation or being coerced into doing something that they might regret.

Every person must make these highly individual decisions based on her own circumstances. The sixteen-year-old I was back then deserved to come to her own conclusions about her future. Passing LD 780 sends a message from this legislature to Maine's people: that pregnancy is not a burden or obligation, pregnant people are full citizens, capable of deciding our futures for ourselves. This is a message you should be proud to send.

Abortion is health care. Motherhood should not be a consequence. Lawmakers must not stand in the way of securing our fundamental rights. Therefore, I urge you to vote **Ought To Pass** on LD 780.

Thank you for your consideration,
Stephanie Bobak
Waterboro, Maine