

Good afternoon, my name is Emily Figdor, and I live in Portland. I'm here today to share my abortion stories and to ask you to pass LD 780 to clearly protect bodily autonomy in the Maine Constitution now and for generations to come.

Thirteen years ago, I was newly pregnant with twins. I was so happy to be pregnant! And twins!

One day early on I went to Maine Med for an ultrasound. The technician was kind and talkative, as she put the cold jelly on my lower belly and got started. But, suddenly, she went silent, the energy in the room completely shifted, and then she abruptly left, muttering nervously that she had to get the doctor. I knew something was dreadfully wrong.

Over the next few days, tests confirmed that one of my fetuses had Trisomy 18—a genetic disorder that affects nearly every organ system in the body.

Half of babies born with Trisomy 18 die within their first week of life; the median lifespan is five to 15 days.

Even worse, there's a high risk of miscarriage or stillbirth with Trisomy 18—which put my other twin at risk, since I could go into labor very early or face other serious complications.

I had been so happy to be pregnant, and now I was faced with the prospect of losing both twins.

After my doctor explained my options and the risks, I made an anguished but clear decision to have an abortion of the fetus with Trisomy 18.

That abortion likely saved the life of my daughter, Harper, who I gave birth to several months later—a healthy baby who weighed nearly nine pounds.

Harper is now 12-years-old. She's a seventh grader at King Middle School. She's a serious and driven student, sings constantly, and is an unbelievably talented cook.

The fetal anomaly I had is the same one that nearly cost Kate Cox of Texas her fertility and possibly her life late last year, while the nation watched in horror as Texas courts and the Texas attorney general refused to grant her the ability to have an abortion, forcing her to travel out of state.

If I lived in Texas now, the abortion I had to save the life of one of my twin daughters would be illegal. Vigilantes could sue anyone who helped me—my doctor, nurses, and even a Lyft driver who took me to the hospital. The hospital would almost certainly have denied me an abortion.

That was my second abortion. About two years earlier, my birth control failed, and I became pregnant. My older daughter was 13 months old at the time. I was still bonding with my baby and

also working and juggling the financial realities of school loans, a mortgage, and now diapers, onesies, and childcare.

Bringing another human being into this world is the most awesome gift and responsibility we have. Some Republican politicians wave away the gravity and complexity. But pregnant people don't.

That abortion also would be illegal if I lived in Texas now.

And it's not just Texas but nearly all states led by Republicans. And it could be Maine in the flash of an eye—as political winds change.

For me, my two daughters, and all Maine people, please vote ought to pass LD 780 and keep abortion safe and legal in Maine, today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.