

Good morning, my name is Lynn Nielsen. I have come here to urge you to vote yes on LD 780, a constitutional amendment that will ensure forever a Maine woman's right to reproductive autonomy. I will tell you a personal story about a pregnancy that I had in 1964 that went awry.

There was an epidemic of Rubella, also known as German Measles, raging across the country. When I was 8 or 9 weeks pregnant, I contracted the virus despite preventative measures. I was told it would have a light impact on my health but would have a severe impact on my little baby. All the major systems, heart, lungs, brain would have been damaged. I was told by my doctor that I could choose to have an abortion. After days of grueling reflection, my husband and I made the painful decision to have an abortion. We loved this baby, and we wanted this baby. And ultimately, an abortion was the right thing for the baby's sake. What followed was untenable. We had to wait for a Board of Ethics at the hospital to approve our petition, so it really wasn't my decision anymore. By the time this was approved, I was in the second trimester of my pregnancy. 14 weeks to be exact. There were complications after my abortion. I hemorrhaged and it was scary..

All people receiving reproductive care deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. I know what it is like to not have my reproductive autonomy respected, and we must make sure that never happens again. LD 780 will ensure that women in Maine will always have the right to reproductive autonomy. Please vote yes on LD 780, I think it's the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time.

Lynn Nielsen