

LD 780 - Constitutional Amendment testimony
Dana Peirce
Yarmouth, Maine

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and Members of the Committee:
My name is Dana Peirce, and I live in Yarmouth, Maine.

I have testified here twice before in support of reproductive rights, so most of you have heard my story. In brief summary, in 2019, I was 32 weeks pregnant with my son Cameron when we abruptly found out that he was suffering and would not be able to live outside of my body. At the time, I could not access abortion care in Maine, which made a terrible situation much worse. Because we had the financial and social resources to leave the state, I was able to have an abortion and relieve Cameron's suffering. I have been telling my story since because I know that many Mainers in my situation would not have been able to access abortion care, and that's not right.

I am so deeply overwhelmed and grateful that you all listened to my story and the stories of others and passed LD 1619 into law. However, in order to ensure that the protections under LD 1619 are not taken away, we need this constitutional amendment. In voting to pass LD 1619, a majority of you showed that you believe pregnant people should have agency over their own bodies throughout pregnancy. With LD 780 you have an opportunity to prove that you believe the people of Maine ought to have direct agency over whether the right to reproductive autonomy is protected in this state. I implore you to let Maine voters like me weigh in on whether to explicitly protect our right to make loving, ethical decisions for our own bodies and lives.

Mine was a very sad situation made much worse by Maine's former laws. You have already done the hard part of changing those laws. Please, allow Maine voters to confirm your decision, and amend our constitution. Please make sure that no other Maine families ever have to suffer through what mine did. Thank you.