

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and Members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Susan Johnston. I live in Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

I got pregnant when I was 17. It was 1963.

It was before Roe v. Wade. It was before the pill was invented. It was before birth control was legal.

My high school boyfriend and I loved each other. Having a baby is supposed to be a happy time but this was a nightmare for both of us.

When we went to tell my parents, my mother closed the door in my face. My father calmed her down, and I stayed there. I was suicidal. I didn't know where to go for help, but my mother did.

She was too ashamed to have a pregnant daughter, so she pretended she was the pregnant one. She told a neighbor. This neighbor knew someone who knew someone. There was a Doctor in a small coal mining town in Pennsylvania who was performing abortions.

My Dad drove me to Pennsylvania. He paid for it. I never asked how much it cost and we never spoke of it again.

2 years later I was living on my own in New York City. Birth control had finally become legal for married women. I went to the Margaret Sanger Clinic to ask for help. The nurse filling out the forms asked me if I was engaged. I realized she was trying to help me. I had to lie! I said yes and was getting married that spring. She gave me the pills.

Yet here we are again. 51 years ago today Roe v. Wade was enacted. I celebrated then, and I cried 2 years ago when it was repealed.

Birth control is now legal and available...but for how long. Laws come and go, legislatures change. We are still fighting for Personal Reproductive Autonomy. That is why I am asking you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 780.

Thank you.