

Sarah Mahoney
Arrowsic
LD 780

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee, I'm Sarah Mahoney. I live in Arrowsic, Maine, and I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 780.

I had an abortion in the early 1980s, when I was 24. In many ways, my story was very typical—I realized I was pregnant after a missed period. I phoned a doctor, and got an appointment to confirm the pregnancy within a week or so. After taking some time to think about it, I decided an abortion was the right choice for me—I was not ready to be a mother.

Today, after listening to hundreds of people's stories through volunteer work at Planned Parenthood, I know there is no such thing as a "typical" abortion. I am deeply grateful to have grown up in this country for granting me that choice, which enabled me to move forward with my life, eventually marrying and having a family.

Yet my daughters and granddaughters live in a different country. The right to decide whether and when to have a family is under constant threat. Since the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, some 25 million women in America, in fact, have already lost access to safe abortion care.

Opponents of LD780 will tell you a vote on a constitutional change is not necessary, that it is an overreach. They will argue that Maine's safeguards of abortion and reproductive freedom are adequate. I strongly disagree. We live in a changing America, where courts and a Conservative minority constantly seek to undermine and take away reproductive freedom. It is happening every day in other states, and sometimes in this very chamber.

The majority of Americans, indeed the majority of Mainers, believe abortion is a basic human right and a healthcare need. Many polls prove that. In every state where abortion is on the ballot, voters support abortion. Please pass this bill, and allow Maine voters the chance to deepen the protection of abortion access.

In closing, I'd like to remind you all of the words of the late Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor:

'The ability of women to participate equally in the economic and social life of the Nation has been facilitated by their ability to control their reproductive lives.'

Please vote Ought to Pass to advance LD 780. Give the people of Maine the chance to protect those rights. Thank you for your time and consideration.