

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Affairs. My name is Reagan Paul and I represent House District 37 and I am here to testify in opposition to LD 227, *"An Act Regarding Health Care in the State."*

The proposed amendment for LD 227 outlines a vision for Maine that is truly egregious and dangerous for the women of our state. As legislators, it is our duty to protect and defend our citizens--not perpetuate a system that removes their power and subjects them to harm from the worst actors in our society.

In an effort to not provide repetitive testimony, I wanted to highlight some unintended (or intended) consequences of this bill related specifically to abortion. I should hope the recklessness of providing life-altering so-called gender affirming care for children who are not equipped to make such a decision, would be obvious. In order to understand what could happen, we must look at some of the darkest parts of the human experience: sex trafficking and domestic abuse.

This bill could actually enables reproductive coercion and crimes against pregnant women and remove any recourse they might have if they are injured by an abortion procedure.

How? There are several ways, but I'll highlight a provision which prohibits Maine courts from enforcing a judgment from another state related to abortion services.

Let's say a woman in Georgia orders abortion pills online and they are mailed from a physician in Maine. She's had no physical exam and no confirmation of either stage or location of pregnancy. She's ectopic, and the abortion pills cause her fallopian tube to burst, and she's rushed into emergency surgery. She loses her fertility—something she'll have to deal with for the rest of her life. This mother has absolutely no legal recourse under the provisions of this bill. In addition, due to the "hostile litigation" provision, SHE is the one who could be sued if she seeks damages.

Or what if instead of losing her fertility, she loses her life? Her family may have no legal recourse for wrongful death if blanket immunity is given to healthcare providers who are supposed to first DO NO HARM. Why? Because a few lawmakers in Augusta decided to play God and determine what are human rights?

Do you really want to remove all liability from abortion providers in this state? If abortion procedures really are safe for women, then why does this bill provide blanket liability coverage for abortion providers and prevent malpractice insurance companies from increasing their rates if these procedures are not higher risk? The

complete removal of any personal responsibility or accountability for physicians is just a Freudian slip of how deadly these procedures really are to women.

In extreme cases, would this bill also protect abusers from prosecution if they coerce a woman to have an abortion? **Forced abortions are not exempted in this bill.** Medication abortion—which is already widely available, accessible, and largely unregulated in our state—is often used as a tool in human trafficking and reproductive coercion. This bill could fling the door wide open for abusers, traffickers, and the worst of society to use chemical abortion drugs—already 63% of all abortions in Maine—to coerce women into ending pregnancies that interfere with their bottom line.

Because of the ease of acquiring abortion pills, under this legislation, women who are harmed by abortion—even forced abortion—may have literally no recourse for injury. Abusive domestic partners, traffickers, and the worst actors in our society may have zero accountability for injuries they cause, because to stop them from assisting in what they could say was something that the woman wanted, we'd be “interfering” with a stated “legal right”.

Maine is supposed to be vacationland. Not a tourist destination for abortion and gender surgery which will make Maine a sanctuary state for abusers and human traffickers who may force their victims to have abortions under the protections afforded in this bill. You have to consider all possible consequences of the harm that this bill could allow. That is your responsibility.

This bill is not about “access” to healthcare. This bill is about empowering abusers.

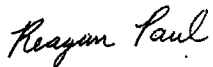
Make no mistake: If this bill passes, Maine will be known as the sex trafficking and domestic abuse capitol of America.

ALL human beings are made in God's image and worthy of protection. This means that all life—regardless of age, ability, gender, race, religion—born and preborn—has infinite value.

Do the right thing. Show the women of this state that you care about them and want to empower them against their abusers, not tie their hands from seeking justice when she is severely wronged.

I urge you to vote “ought not to pass.”

Sincerely,



Representative Reagan Paul