

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry, and committee members. My name is Christina Ouellette, and I am a legal, taxpaying citizen of the town of Bradley. I am here today to speak in strong opposition of LD 227.

As I stand here, I am trying to remain calm because after reading this amendment, I am so angry and sickened by what it proposes. I would like to ask you to consider some questions before taking any action on this bill.

Why does it seem there are so many people in elected positions who are determined to make the State of Maine a sanctuary state for legal abortion and gender-affirming care, in many cases for minors?

Why does it seem there are so many people who have minors in the cross-hairs of the target and want to allow them to permanently destroy their bodies before they have completed their physical and mental growth? Why is it so important that children be allowed to make these changes to their bodies, sometimes at the persistence of some adult in their lives? Why not affirm the way they were born and require they wait until they are 18 to make these changes? If we're not okay with that, why don't we allow them to drive when they're 10, drink and smoke when they're 8, and vote when they're 12? Is it possible they are not mature enough to make these decisions?

Who benefits from this bill? Is this an issue where we can just follow the money trail to some large organization who sees nothing more than dollar signs in their actions?

Where are the rights and considerations for the parents of minors who may be brought to our state for any of these procedures, possibly without the parents' consent or knowledge? What right does the State of Maine have to potentially take away rights from parents in all 50 states? What stops this from leading to cases of kidnapping or child trafficking?

Why does this bill give more protections to healthcare providers than it does to parents and legal guardians? Why does it feel like this bill is trying to completely remove parents from the picture? Who is going to be left picking up the pieces in the event these minors later have regrets for the abuse inflicted on them? I can guarantee it would not be the medical providers.

Who is going to pay for this "legally protected healthcare?" Will the tax-paying citizens of Maine be required to foot the bill for yet another thing that they either do not approve of or have no say in? When is enough, enough?

And lastly: how would you feel if this were one of your kids or grandkids and your rights were taken away from you? How would you feel if one of them were mutilated in the name of legal healthcare?

I don't know about you, but there is no amount of money that anyone could offer that would get me to vote for something that could potentially put minors in this kind of danger. I pray for protection over anyone who would be affected by this bill if passed. May God have mercy on the State of Maine and any legislator who votes to pass this bill.