

Good afternoon members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services. My name is Katherine Parker-Harding from Sidney, Maine. I am here, along with many others, to strongly oppose LD 227.

The state of Maine has shown on many occasions that we do not support abortion, especially this previous May when over a thousand citizens of this state came to this very building during LD 1619. I have looked into the specifics of abortion since I was old enough to comprehend the material I could find on it. At the moment of conception, an entire new bundle of DNA will form and write the story of a person's entire lifetime. Every physical characteristic the baby will be born with is determined at that very moment. Two weeks after conception a mother can see her pregnancy status on a pregnancy test. At five to six weeks ultrasound can detect a small heartbeat. At thirteen weeks the baby now has most if not all of the organs and characteristics it will require to function for the rest of his or her life. The most premature birth in this country took place at the University of Alabama in Birmingham where little Curtis Means proved at a mere 21 weeks that babies can survive outside the womb far before 40 weeks. For decades more evidence has piled up to prove that abortion at any time of pregnancy is immoral and medically unnecessary than to prove otherwise.

In concern to supposed gender-affirming care, my only response is this. At age five, I wanted to be Snow White and sing to animals. At age ten, I wanted to open a daycare. At age twelve, I wanted to be a veterinarian. At age fifteen, a teacher. At age 16, I began a law pathway which I ended shortly after turning nineteen. Now at nineteen when I am asked who I am and what I want to be, I simply state that I wish to be a woman of God, a mother, and a wife. No career is necessary for my life to be fulfilled. This is what I know to be my path now, but until recently this changed at the drop of a hat. If a rather determined little individual such as my younger self did not decide exactly who I wanted to be until the age of nineteen, how can anyone else younger than me rightfully decide that they want to permanently change their bodies? Two years ago I could not have gotten a tattoo without my parent's consent. A year ago I had to apply for a special license to carry a concealed weapon. Today I could not buy myself a pack of cigarettes or a beer. Yet this law wants to allow those my age and much younger to permanently alter their bodies without their parent's consent?

The most dangerous part of this bill is nothing short of the legalization of kidnapping. LD 227 allows for the relocation and the performing of surgeries on minors without parental consent. This sets a precedent for any state of any political majority to allow for the relocation of minors without parental consent for any reason they deem necessary. As a woman who wants nothing more than children of my own, this horrifies me. Unless the home is determined physically abusive, no one has the right to remove any children from their legal guardians. Especially not the government as our government was made to ensure the rights of the people, not to take away the God-given rights of its citizens.