

March 3, 2024

Senator Perry and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee, my name is Kathleen Hale, I live in China, Maine, and I oppose LD 227 – An Act Regarding Healthcare in the State. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee.

I am astounded that this bill has been put forth as a credible desire of the citizens of Maine. What business does the state of Maine have, allowing children in other states to be taken from their parents and families if they do not support their child having gender reassignment surgery or abortion? Does our state government know better than the parents in other states? Is it caring to allow an adult to kidnap a child and flee with them to another state to have life-altering surgery and treatments? The state of Maine should not dictate what out-of-staters' children need for surgery or treatment. What business does the state of Maine have legislating for other states?

This bill is unethical on so many levels. Allowing no need for parental consent of such serious matters is unconscionable. Children that are not legally old enough to drink alcohol or smoke tobacco will be legally protected to be mutilated by surgically removing their body parts and castrating them. It is one thing if the person is an adult and desires to make these life-altering decisions and pays for them – but it is entirely another thing to have children make life-altering decisions while they are still forming. Conceivably, if made into law, a child could be raped and transported to Maine for an abortion. And how ludicrous is it that a kidnapper could seek damages against the adults who have custody of the child?

Incredulously, this bill would allow practitioners who may be under adverse action with their professional license in another state to come to Maine and give these treatments and surgeries to children. How is this caring or safe?

How does this bill benefit Mainers? We care about the cost of living, our constitutional rights, our economy, the drug crises, jobs, education, healthcare, etc. As a lifelong Mainer with hundreds of family and friends that reside here, I don't know anyone that desires our elected officials to advocate or support such a bill. To add injury to insult about not paying attention to what issues we do care about—you'd actually have Maine taxpayers foot the bill for such things.

Also, this bill was put forth deceptively. LD 1735 was noted to be about "gender affirming health care" but was shut down in the Judiciary committee; very early in the legislative session LD 227 was a concept draft in your committee with a simple sentence about health care in our state; the unassuming text attaches pages upon pages of amendment which then details the shocking contents that's similar to LD 1735 but more sinister. A public hearing that is hastily arranged and communicated solely by email to legislators and not added to the state website is not being transparent. The fact that Mainers barely find out about it and it's scheduled on an election day isn't fair. Maine people deserve better than this.

As I understand it, late term abortion would no longer be medically necessary; with LD1619 it was purported that abortion up to full term pregnancy would be rare and would have to be medically necessary.

It doesn't matter the political affiliation, there is no way that most people in Maine want you to be entertaining this as law. Assuredly, none of you would be in office had you promoted this during your campaign. Please, truly represent your constituents by voting **Ought Not To Pass** for LD 227.

Respectfully,
Kathleen Hale