

Spoken:

IN SUPPORT OF LD 260

Before the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary
March 4th 2025

Heidi J Vierthaler
Ecological and Equal Rights Advocate

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to address this committee.

I am Heidi J Vierthaler, a Freeport resident and have been an Ecological and Equal Rights Advocate since the early 70's. I am here in support of LD 260.

My first introduction to the Equal Rights Amendment was when my Mother took us to a Rally for the ERA, in Atlanta, and I can still hear the crescendo of chants: E.R.A. Equal Rights for Equal Pay – Let's give a shout for the E.R.A.!!!!

We also took a stand for Civil Rights there, I held my Mother's hand as we crossed the picket lines protesting against the desegregation of our Lily White school, on my very first day of first grade! For which our family was retaliated against by the KKK down the street from us.

And, "Jesus says "love your neighbor as yourself" in the Bible in Matthew 22:39 and Mark 12:31. Jesus said this as part of a summary of the law, which also includes loving God."

A baby is born with only 1 part of the anatomy that is different. If you held up every human baby looking from the back, all the anatomy would be the same, So why do we make such a big deal about this one tiny difference?

So I have always stood on the right side of History especially during the emergence of the Gay Rights movement.

In the Mid-90's I attended the Portland, Maine Gay Pride Parades with my "Proud to Be Straight and Supportive" sign.

When I moved to Boston, in their Gay Pride Parade, I marched with my sign next to the Gay Marriage Float proclaiming "A round of applause for the cause", and "Give it up for the right to love who you love!!!!"

Nowhere in the Maine (or U.S.!) Constitutions are equal rights for all people explicitly guaranteed— *It's time for Maine to do the right thing*. Unlike laws which can be easily changed or repealed, a constitutional amendment has a higher threshold for being changed and/or rolled back, so it's a better way to establish rights.

I didn't work so hard throughout the decades to stand up for EqualRights, only to fear major rollbacks today.

NOW is the time to establish human rights in Maine's Constitution to demand equality for ALL!

Thank you, do you have any questions?

###

Written:

IN SUPPORT OF LD 260

Before the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary
March 4th 2025

Heidi J Vierthaler
Ecological and Equal Rights Advocate

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee Judiciary, thank you for the opportunity to address this committee.

I am Heidi J Vierthaler, a Freeport resident and have been an Ecological and Equal Rights Advocate since the early 70's. I am here in support of LD 260.

My first introduction to the Equal Rights Amendment was when my Mother took us to a Rally for the ERA, in Atlanta, and I can still hear the crescendo of chants: E.R.A. Equal Rights for Equal Pay – Let's give a shout for the E.R.A.!!!!

We also took a stand for Civil Rights there, I held my Mother's hand as we crossed the picket lines protesting against the desegregation of our Lily White school, on my very first day of first grade! For which our family was retaliated against by the KKK down the street from us.

And, "Jesus says "love your neighbor as yourself" in the Bible in Matthew 22:39 and Mark 12:31. Jesus said this as part of a summary of the law, which also includes loving God."

A baby Is born with only 1 part of the anatomy that is different. If you held up every human baby looking from the back; all the anatomy would be the same, So why do we make such a big deal about this one tiny difference?

So I have always stood on the right side of History especially during the emergence of the Gay Rights movement.

In the Mid-90's I attended the Portland, Maine Gay Pride Parades with my "Proud to Be Straight and Supportive" sign.

When I moved to Boston, in their Gay Pride Parade, I marched with my sign next to the Gay Marriage Float proclaiming "A round of applause for the cause", and "Give it up for the right to love who you love!!!!"

Equality is not guaranteed in our foundational legal documents. It's time for Maine to do the right thing – both symbolically and practically – for all Mainers. The Inclusive Equal Right Amendment guarantees equal rights under the law. Not more rights... equal rights.

Give the state of Maine new tools to address discrimination and violations of civil rights that have not yet been, or cannot fully be, addressed by state law.

Ensures that even if state statutes or laws change, equal rights for all are still protected in Maine's constitution– something more than 29 states have already done.

This is why we endeavor for an ERA on the state level! Mainers cannot wait on Congress to act. NOW is the time to establish human rights in Maine's constitution to demand equality for ALL!

Nowhere in the Maine (or U.S.!) Constitutions are equal rights for all people explicitly guaranteed– It's time for Maine to do the right thing. Unlike laws which can be easily changed or repealed, a constitutional amendment has a higher threshold for being changed and/or rolled back, so it's a better way to establish rights.

I didn't work so hard throughout the decades to stand up for EqualRights, only to fear major rollbacks today.

NOW is the time to establish human rights in Maine's Constitution to demand equality for ALL!

Thank you, do you have any questions?