Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable committee members, my name is Emma MacMahon, I am from Poland, Maine, and I am here to speak on LD 975. I am a motivated and engaged civic thinker, a Maine SkillsUSA Gold medalist, a National Qualifier for Emergency Medical Technical skills and knowledge, and a high school student. As a student body president, former parliamentarian, and school board student representative I have written and taken part in the policy process. I am also a former Girls Nation Senator, a prestigious role in which 2 high school juniors from each state are selected to serve as senators for a week in Washington DC. During my time as a girls' nation senator, I co-authored a bill, read, amended, argued, passed, and failed bills.

Like all of you, I am here to do what I know best and represent others today. This legislation not only takes away the autonomy women need over their reproductive rights and choices but ignores further health risks and life situations that require access to safe and legal abortions. This legislation will put women at risk by removing legal protections and imposing restrictions. We must acknowledge that each pregnancy is unique, and women deserve the right to make informed decisions without fear of criminalization.

Research from the University of Colorado Boulder states that without access to safe abortions, there would be a 24% increase in maternal deaths. As maternal death rates rose by 33% in Texas after their abortion ban, the nation's rate dropped by approximately 7%. Roughly 42 million women worldwide experience unintended pregnancy including assault victims. Nearly half (20 million), of these women undergo unsafe abortion due to the lack of access and legality. Roughly 68,000 pregnant women die annually from unsafe abortions, which is the leading cause of maternal mortality (13%). This information can be found on the National Library of Medicine website. Instead of creating bills that limit access, create criteria, and criminalize abortion rights, the Maine state government should be proactive by facing the fact that abortions aren't going away and recognize that without education and access, there will be an increase in deaths. Does Maine want to become a state that contributes to maternal death rates?

From the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and their creator endows them with certain Unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Where is there liberty in denying crucial medical care to women? Can you truthfully tell me that you view and treat women as created equal if anatomical rights are taken away? This legislation ignores established medical sciences and infringes on personal freedom.

Vote against this bill to protect my future as an EMT. I don't want to go to work treating an increase in women suffering from dangerous pregnancies, assault victims forced to carry, or women going into hypovolemic or septic shock due to the lack of medical care and abortions. As a daughter, I hope you will vote to protect my body. As a young woman who wishes to have a family someday, I hope you vote for the future of women who deserve respect, equality, and medical care. Thank you for your time, I am happy to answer any questions regarding my testimony or related concerns about this bill.

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