

Michael Arata

New Gloucester

2024-03-04

Testimony Against LD 227

Dear Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services Committee-

My name is Michael Arata and I am a resident of New Gloucester. I am writing in opposition to LD227.

This bill has been brought forward in a deceptive manner contrary to the accepted committee and public review process. Prior to last Wednesday the bill was only a "concept draft" with essentially no language. On Wednesday 2/28 the amendment was presented to the committee only, but not visible to the public on the public website. Then the public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday 3/5. As of today, Monday 3/4, the bill as shown on the public website still does not show the amendment. Normally, the public is given two weeks to review and reflect on a bill before the public hearing, but in this case the public has not even had a chance to see the amendment. This is a violation of government transparency. Furthermore, the public hearing was scheduled for election day. This is unreasonable because it creates a hardship for people who want to both vote and also testify to the committee in person.

The language of this bill is also deceptive and could be considered Orwellian in its doublespeak. "Gender affirming care" is neither affirming nor caring. To be affirming to our troubled young people it would be right to say to them that they are loved and accepted just as they are, and there are constructive ways to work through their problems that do not involve life altering surgery. "Reproductive health care" is a dishonest phrase because abortion results in the violent death of a premature baby.

There are serious concerns about how this bill will affect a miscarriage of justice across state lines. In the case of a young woman who is being trafficked, will this bill make it easier for her abuser to bring her to Maine to cover up the evidence? In the case of an acrimonious child custody dispute, how will the parental rights of both parents be respected?

This bill touches on sensitive social issues which require more consideration and thoughtful discussion. For this reason, I respectfully ask that you vote against this bill. Thank you.

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