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LD 227

I read in the newspaper about recent threats and a letter from attorneys general in anti-choice states in opposition to LD 227 which would shield healthcare providers who service people from outside Maine.

I am sorry that legislators are put under this pressure and fear, but I hope you will not cave into these bullies. What will happen to our democracy, if we do?

I feel I can relate to your concerns as an abortion and LGBTQ+ rights advocate (volunteer) of almost forty years. Once abortion providers and their staff became targets of violence (arson and murder) by so-called pro-life advocates, most of us have experienced this fear. A bumper sticker on our cars, letter to the editor or our participation in public demonstrations has made us targets as well.

Every week, six to twelve pro-choice activists gather in Waterville for an hour long vigil to remind the public of the importance of keeping abortion care legal. While the vast majority of responses are positive, we are always on the alert for an attack. So far, fortunately, we've only experienced verbal abuse and revving truck/car engines.

Does this fear deter us from speaking out? It does not. Why? Because as senior citizens, we know the dire consequences of not having access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare.

In 1972, a 19 year-old dorm mate had to take a bus from rural Ohio to New York City by herself in order to end her pregnancy caused by date rape. That's fear!

In 1921, my grandmother found herself pregnant for the sixth time before she was even thirty. In desperation, she tried to self-abort. She died, and left five children motherless including my father who was two years-old. The lack of a mother at such a young age negatively affected him throughout his life.

As a members of Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights, my husband (a retired general practice physician) and I, strongly encourage you to stand up to the bullies, respond to the lies being spread about LD 227, educate your constituents and colleagues, and vote to ensure that all people receive the healthcare they critically need and deserve.