

Anthony Lewis
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LD 682

Dear ladies and gentlemen of the judiciary,

Good morning.

I would like to jump right in by saying this doesn't seem like it should be a complex issue to me. I understand that emotions are high, and people feel very strongly about this issue. I recognize and admire that the proponents of this bill are striving to act upon empirical evidence and the opinions of medical professionals. That is admirable and understandable. I also recognize that some people have an ideological or religious opposition to abortion or contraception. I understand folks feel very strongly about this, and I completely understand. Having your opinion is fine; forcing it upon someone else is not. One's religious or ideological beliefs have no place in legislation.

At the end of the day, it is the imperative of every American citizen that they remain free and self-actualized as long as they reside in this nation. As Americans, we pride ourselves on our independence and freedom to make our own decisions. As Mainers, we pride ourselves on our ingenuity and hardiness. I've lived in Maine my whole life, and something I love about this state is the way people mind their own business, unless someone's in trouble. Unless someone needs a hand, or is in danger of being hurt, folks around here stick to their own. The way I see it, most of my neighbors would drive a woman -- like my mom or my sister -- to the nearest hospital or clinic for reproductive care in a heartbeat. All they'd have to do is ask.

A woman's right to choose what she does with her body should be absolute and unassailable. The circumstances of her decision to terminate pregnancy (within a reasonable timeframe) are no one's but her own. She should be able to access comprehensive reproductive care without question, because Maine isn't about sticking your nose in someone's business. Maine is about working hard, keeping your head down, and lending a hand when you can. I see no reason why a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy should come into question.

Access to contraception and abortion should be available to every Mainer, regardless of circumstance. This is a state where we value our freedom and independence. Maine isn't always an easy place to live; you have to be hardy and brave to make it here. Every Mainer should be able to make his or her own decision regarding their health, no questions asked. We are a free and independent people. Let's keep it that way.

Sincerely,

Mr. Anthony J Lewis, BHP