

Good morning, members of the Senate Committee,

My name is Rhiannon McQuaide, and I am a proud Mainer and law student. While I cannot be present today, I strongly oppose the bill proposed by Representative Abigail Griffin.

It is deeply troubling that those claiming to be "pro-life" focus so heavily on protecting a non-viable fetus while ignoring the 35,000 children in Maine living in poverty. I do not believe this agenda is truly about protecting life; it is about imposing religious views and controlling women's bodies. If these advocates cared about life, they would prioritize improving the well-being of children already born, ensuring their education, healthcare, and basic needs are met.

Like many of my fellow Mainers, I was shocked and deeply disappointed to learn that Representative Griffin is sponsoring a bill that undermines a woman's right to make her own choices about her body. According to the Maine Bureau of Corporations, Elections, and Commissions, Representative Griffin received only 4,268 votes in 2024. To put that into perspective, Maine has a population of over 1.15 million eligible voters, meaning that Representative Griffin's supporters make up just 0.4% of the state's population. Despite this, her proposed bill is rooted in an agenda that approximately 64% of Mainers oppose—one that seeks to criminalize abortions and impose criminal penalties on both women seeking abortions and the doctors who perform them. It represents a clear departure from the values and priorities of the majority that Representative Griffin was elected to serve. Furthermore, this bill seeks to repeal laws that protect pregnant individuals from elevated aggravated assault and domestic violence, further dismantling protections for Mainers.

For years, Maine has proudly upheld a woman's right to make decisions about her own body. This bill threatens to erase those rights, pushing us backward instead of forward. It would strip away the fundamental ability for women in Maine to make decisions about their bodies, a right that has been in place since abortion was legalized in Maine in 1979. Repealing these protections would leave individuals with no real choice—especially those facing difficult, life-altering circumstances.

This bill does not protect life. It strips away the agency of individuals, forcing them into difficult and harmful situations with potentially life-altering consequences. The people of Maine deserve the right to make their own decisions—whether regarding abortion, pregnancy, or their health—without the fear of criminal repercussions.

We are not Alabama. We are not Louisiana. We are Maine—a state that has long prided itself on personal freedoms and progressive values. We cannot let this bill take us down a path that undermines those principles. This legislation does not reflect the values that have defined Maine for decades.

I urge you to stand up for the rights of individuals in Maine. Reject this bill, and protect the dignity, autonomy, and health of every person in our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Rhiannon McQuaide