

Testimony Kristin Overton, Resident of Chesterville, ME

*LD 682: An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Abortions,
LD 253 An Act to Prevent the MaineCare Program from Covering Abortion Services,
LD 975: An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion*

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

March 24, 2025

Good morning, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Kristin Overton and I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony against LD 682: An Act to Amend Certain Laws Regarding Abortions, LD 253 An Act to Prevent the MaineCare Program from Covering Abortion Services, and LD 975: An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion.

I strongly urge you to vote against these bills. Limiting the availability of and/or criminalizing abortion violates fundamental rights, endangers lives, and disproportionately harms marginalized communities. When abortion is restricted, individuals seeking the procedure are often forced into unsafe and unregulated alternatives, leading to severe health risks, complications, and even death. Criminalizing abortion does not eliminate the need for it; instead, it punishes those who may already be in distressing situations, such as survivors of rape, those with life-threatening pregnancies, or individuals facing extreme financial or personal hardship. Moreover, restricting abortion disproportionately affects low-income individuals and people of color, who may lack access to healthcare and the resources necessary to travel to places where abortion remains legal.

Forcing individuals to carry unwanted pregnancies to term can lead to severe physical, emotional, and socioeconomic consequences. Physically, pregnancy and childbirth carry significant health risks, including complications such as preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, and even life-threatening conditions, particularly for those without access to adequate healthcare. Emotionally, being compelled to give birth can result in long-term psychological distress, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress, especially for individuals who became pregnant due to rape or abuse.

Socioeconomically, unwanted pregnancies can push individuals into financial hardship, as the cost of raising a child is immense, often forcing many to leave school or lose job opportunities. This disproportionately impacts low-income individuals who may already struggle to meet their basic needs. Additionally, children born into situations where they are not wanted or cannot be properly cared for are more likely to face neglect, poverty, and instability, perpetuating cycles of hardship across generations.

Personal reproductive decisions should be made by individuals and their doctors, not dictated by politicians or laws that overlook medical and situational complexities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Kristin Overton