

Jason Raper
Auburn
LD 975

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Testimony of Jason Raper in Opposition of LD 975: An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Jason Raper, resident of Auburn, Androscoggin County. Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to voice my opposition for LD 975: An Act to Repeal Laws Allowing Abortion and to Criminalize Abortion.

The central purpose of this bill is to establish the potential criminality associated with abortions. With the extent of the restrictions on abortion services laid out in the proposed legislation of LD 682, these two bills would rank Maine among some of the most restrictive abortions rights states in the nation.

In Florida and South Carolina, abortion is legal up to 6 weeks. In states like Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama, abortion is banned at any stage with varying exceptions similar to this legislative proposal. Meanwhile, Montana, Wyoming, and Kansas ban abortion after 22 weeks or later.

Are we really seeking our peer states to be Texas or Alabama? Are we really saying that states like Florida and Montana are less draconian than our own?

I always thought that what was synonymous with the Maine identity was Yankee ingenuity. An identity that wasn't just some sort of quirky MacGyvering, but the sort of practical perseverance modeled by independent and principled women like Olympia Snowe and Margaret Chase Smith. This legislation isn't in their tradition, but in someone else's, and we need to each take some time to consider what we're being asked to turn away from and what new identity we're being asked to embrace.

Maine has always trusted women to make these decisions. Why should we turn away from that now?

I urge you to vote "Ought not to pass."