

Aurelia Snow
Old Town
LD 975

Legislators of the state of Maine,

today, I am writing as a life-long citizen of this beautiful state to share my strong opposition to LD 975 (and all related bills which seek to either directly or underhandedly remove the right of bodily autonomy and medical privacy from Mainers).

I am writing because I feel a personal responsibility to speak up and out about protecting our inherent and intrinsic rights to our own bodies. Many years ago, I was a very loud and a very devoted anti-choice voter and casual forced-birth activist. I participated in silent protests and weaponized prayer circles. And I did so with righteous indignation, free from any need to self-reflect or grow as a moral and ethical person - you see, it is devastatingly easy to "advocate for the unborn" when the unborn will never correct you, demand things from you, or engage in behaviors you disagree with. In short, I was fueled by my own ego and the path to feeling morally superior was paved with my past anti-abortion antics and rhetoric.

I have moved on from "advocating" for the docile and silent "unborn" into something far more challenging and meaningful: fighting for people who are standing before me in the flesh - raw and complex and outspoken and active. Women are people who could hurt you, disappoint you, or speak out against you, and yet even in this inevitability we know that their right to privacy and autonomy is unequivocal. This moralizing over which part of our bodies are we allowed to fully own and control is nothing short of a treacherous and poisonous denial of our full humanity. It is not a conversation about "protecting life" - it is a conversation about the dehumanization of all the women you know, transforming them into objects which are intended to be caged or displayed at the whims of others. I urge you to reject these assumptions. I urge you to see all the women and girls of Maine as fully human, with all the legal protections and rights that this implies.

And so today, I write as someone who used to not fully understand the spectrum of abortion but now appreciates the availability of medical procedures which can offer hope and peace. I write not just for myself and those close to me, but also for every woman, every girl, and every person who will ever need to make such a defining decision in their life. I write for women who have been coerced and assaulted in abusive relationships and now pregnancy is being wielded as a weapon against them. I write for girls who were denied comprehensive sex education who thought they were being careful and responsible. I write for people in poverty, in substance use, and in unsafe or transient situations who know deep in their soul that they do not wish to be parents right now. I write for your mothers, aunts, wives, and daughters who had a desperately wanted pregnancy that terminated itself and now needs abortion procedures to avoid infection and death. And I write for those women, those girls, and those people who curse and shame me for my reproductive rights support - I write today so that in their time of need, they will still be able to access necessary healthcare even if they hate me for it.

I praise God for my transformation from someone who used to hide behind a fake righteousness of "pro-life activism" into someone who can humbly admit that another person's medical needs are none of my business. I embrace the blessing of personal choice and all the opportunity and autonomy that it gives. And it is because of this change in myself, and my perspective as someone who used to be a person that would support these bills, that I am writing today. I earnestly urge you to reject any and all attempts to restrain medical privacy and personal bodily liberty in the state of Maine. Please vote against LD 975 and all associated bills!

with respect,
Aurelia.