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Naples  
LD 975

My name is Kelly Stanley and ordinarily I would say Good morning, but to be honest I'm struggling this morning knowing that LD 975 & 253 are going to committee in mere minutes.

As a politically "purple" resident of Maine, bills like this make it extremely difficult to stand behind the Republican Party. Since I have my reasons to not fully stand behind the Democrats either, I must speak my piece to the issues as they arise. With this, I am speaking out against LD 975 & 253. As a woman, a mother to both sexes, and a compassionate human being I encourage you do away with this bill and pursuing anything like it in the future.

Abortions have been around long before you or I, or even this great state was ever a thought. First recorded abortion reference to date was in the Egyptian medical text 'The Ebers Papyrus' in 1550BC. Almost 3,500 years ago and throughout history they have known the need for safe and effective birth control and abortions. That need will continue long after we are gone. Knowing we can have an effect on how safe they are in the future directly relates the health and wellbeing of the women in our community and to how many children may or may not be born into a life of struggle, disease, poverty, or abuse.

Beyond the invaluable right to bodily autonomy, which I hope stands for itself, Maine and its residents don't have the infrastructure or financial resources to support potentially thousands of children being added to state aid and into school systems each year. There is already a significant lack of foster homes available for the children who currently need them. Classrooms already have a teacher student ratio that doesn't allow for individual needs to be met and creates substandard learning. Doctors offices already have months sometimes years on a waitlists. Cost of living is growing to be something the average Mainer already struggles with. The housing crisis and lack of beds in shelters is paramount.

For these reasons, and so much more, it would not only be unethical to pursue this, but would show a willful disregard to the well-being of those already living in Maine. Women who have to suffer enough, when facing such a devastating decision, should not be subjected to laws like this. Generations of women who have fought for our rights, the rights of each woman on this committee and in politics today to hold the position they do, should have the echos of their voices heard. Stand up for women by speaking for our autonomy, stand up for children by not sentencing them to lives of hardship, stand up for Mainers by creating more opportunities of wealth and health instead of more strain on the system.... and if you are unable to do this, then please stand aside for those that will.