

Christine Szalay
Damariscotta
LD 1154

Testimony Against LD 253, LD 682, LD 886, LD 887, LD 975, LD 1007, LD 1154
Judiciary Committee
March 28, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Committee thank you for accepting my testimony.

My name is Christine Szalay and I live in Damariscotta. I am providing testimony opposing all of these proposed bills limiting abortion in Maine.

I am one of the lucky ones. I've never had an unplanned pregnancy so I've never had to decide about an abortion. But I have supported a number of close friends who have made that decision and I believe that abortion is a right that must be protected. I believe that a woman has a right to privacy in all healthcare but especially during times of pregnancy, miscarriage, and abortion.

I have had two miscarriages and also lost a twin in utero during one of my pregnancies. LD975 would require miscarriages to be tracked, recording demographic data including race and level of education. Though the woman's name is confidential, in my view, this is a way to chisel away at rights of women to have the privacy of their healthcare decisions protected.

During one of my pregnancies, I received test results indicating that my son would have a high risk of having Down's Syndrome. Though I was advised that the best way for a more definite diagnosis would be to have amniocentesis, I declined that option, and chose to wait many weeks until a safer diagnostic ultrasound could provide more information. Though I intended to continue the pregnancy no matter the results, it was an extremely stressful time for me and my family. I cannot imagine how difficult it would be to have gotten results indicating a fatal genetic disease or anomaly. LD1154 would force a woman to undergo a great deal of stress and pressure not to have an abortion and to sign off on a legal document refusing access to hospice care for the fetus! This legislation is the cruelest of these proposed laws and seems to me to be completely without compassion for the woman facing a horrific diagnosis. The termination of a pregnancy or carrying a fetus to term must be a decision made by the woman, her family, and her doctor.

All of the bills before this committee chisel away at a woman's right to make decisions about her own body from tracking miscarriages, to making it more difficult for women to obtain abortions, to requiring a woman to hear about reversing an abortion procedure, to taking away funding, and finally to banning abortion outright.

This entire group of proposed legislation is an assault on women's autonomy. I urge you to vote Ought Not To Pass.