

Michelle Zagardo  
Bethel  
LD 682

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Michelle Zagardo and I am a constituent from Bethel. I write today to express my strong opposition to SP 297, a bill that would impose arbitrary restrictions on abortion care in Maine and introduce an invasive data collection process for those seeking reproductive healthcare. This legislation undermines the rights of patients and providers while failing to serve any clear public health or policy interest. First, the bill's restriction on abortion "after viability," except in narrowly defined circumstances, fails to account for the complex and deeply personal realities that can arise in pregnancy. The determination of viability is not a fixed threshold but rather a medical judgment dependent on a variety of factors, including fetal development, maternal health, and available medical interventions. Placing legislative restrictions on this process ignores the nuanced decision-making best left to medical professionals and their patients. Moreover, SP 297's requirement that providers report detailed personal and demographic information about patients who receive abortions raises significant privacy concerns. Requiring providers to submit data such as race, marital status, level of education, and the method of abortion to a centralized database is an unnecessary intrusion into personal medical decisions. What legitimate public interest is served by collecting this information? How will this data be used, and what safeguards will be in place to ensure patient privacy and prevent misuse? These reporting requirements risk stigmatizing those who seek abortion care and could have a chilling effect on providers, potentially discouraging them from offering essential medical services, which I suspect is exactly the point. The collection of such personal data, especially in an era of increasing threats to reproductive rights, raises valid fears about surveillance, targeted discrimination, and the erosion of medical confidentiality. SP 297 is not about protecting public health or enhancing patient care—it is about controlling reproductive choices and imposing barriers on individuals seeking medical care. Maine has a proud tradition of respecting personal liberty and bodily autonomy. This bill stands in direct opposition to those values. I urge you to stand in support of policies that trust individuals and medical professionals to make informed, compassionate decisions free from political interference. With gratitude, Michelle Zagardo