



The American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS

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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and the Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee

My name is Shannon Carr and I serve as the Chair of the Maine Section of the American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG), which is representative of our national organization. Thank you for your deliberations on “personhood” and if it is the case that this concept should even be considered by this legislative body.

The Maine Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), representing physicians and partners in Maine dedicated to advancing the health of all those in need of obstetric and gynecologic care, strongly opposes LD 1930, which would amend the definition of “person” and “life” under a portion of Maine's criminal statutes. Such framing of this deeply philosophical matter is not only beyond the expertise and purview of politicians, but it is also not universally agreed upon or understood and would impose a belief system upon all Mainers, thereby fundamentally unconstitutional. From a medical and health perspective, this legislation poses a downstream significant threat to the reproductive rights and health care of Mainers, as it attempts to confer “personhood” from the point of conception.

Elevating the legal status of a conceptus and fetus to that of pregnant individuals has wide implications for access to medications, medical interventions, and management of high-risk pregnancies. In addition, LD 1930 opens the door to restrict and/or eliminate patients’ access to essential reproductive care, such as contraception, emergency contraception, and abortion.

Furthermore, LD 1930 would set a dangerous precedent by allowing the government to dictate language in medical and legal contexts. This could lead to further infringement upon bodily autonomy and erosion of trust in medical experts, which will harm patients and the

clinicians who care for them. Shared decision-making must remain solely between patients and physicians and must continue to rely on science, best practices, and individuals' needs, values and preferences to determine appropriate medical care without political interference. Ultimately, requiring physicians to treat a fertilized egg, embryo, and fetus as a "person" with the same scope of rights as people in their care will jeopardize the lives and health of our patients.

Sound medical science, rather than ideology and religious-based doctrines, must be at the core of legislation that addresses the health and well-being of Maine citizens. For that reason, ACOG urges you to oppose LD 1930.

Respectfully submitted,
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Chair Maine Section ACOG