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STATE SENATE

Hi everyone,

I wanted to share with you the fight against the abortion ban that passed yesterday as part of our state budget. To support an amendment to remove it from the budget, I gave this speech on the Senate floor.

"Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of this amendment to remove HB 625 from our state budget.

As many or all of you know, I am pregnant - 27.5 weeks pregnant, specifically. We have been fortunate so far in this pregnancy that from what we know, our baby is healthy. As a mother, I wake up every day - and, frankly, so many times during the night - worrying about this baby. I drink decaf coffee in the morning. I take vitamins. I try not to have too much stress - which is difficult in this position, especially during weeks like this one - and I make sure to eat fruits and vegetables. I avoid alcohol, deli

meat, sushi, soft cheeses, too much sugar, and other things every day - because every day, every minute, I think about my baby. Because it lives inside of me, and because I am a mom. And I know that each decision I make, starting from the moment I knew this baby was with me and part of me in this world, could hurt my baby. Could help them. Could protect them. And that was true from the first moments of nausea until, if I am lucky, I see my baby grow old, and hopefully happy. I will, as each of you always have, care for my children and worry every moment, every day about them, because that is what we do - as parents.

This bill threatens to interrupt that relationship - with the intrusion of the state into one of the most intimate and fundamental relationships on our planet.

At 27 weeks pregnant, am I not the same mother I was 3 weeks ago? 4 weeks ago? What has changed at 24 weeks that no longer makes me the same caring mother?

A member of this chamber was quoted recently as saying that at 6 months pregnant, “democrats” do not think of “these” as babies. In response, I ask, at 6 months pregnant, do you not still consider me a mother? A woman? Do you honestly believe that I would not do what is best at each moment for the life I am growing, that I am responsible for? It is a most sacred duty and one, I would beg of you, not to ever dare to think we - as complex, highly intelligent and capable mothers, women, and pregnant people - would ever dismiss.

This bill is about respect. For the women who bear the important responsibility of carrying our society's children, and their right to personal, physical autonomy. I hope I am so lucky to not today, not in 4 weeks, and not ever, find out that something is wrong with my baby. It would simply break my heart. But if I ever do, the best person to make any incredibly thoughtful and complex decisions about what to do for that baby - inside or outside of my womb - is me, with my wife. We have the ability to consult with our trusted medical providers. We don't need any help from anyone here.

I have been your colleague for 6 months and, I have to say, this feels personal. When I look at each of you, it is hard to imagine that you would vote to take away my ability to decide what I do with my body. It is hard to imagine you believe this legislative body is better equipped to make personal, private health care decisions than me and my family.

And if you truly believe you do belong in the room with me for that decision, please let me know which medical procedures you would like me to join you for. Which decisions you're willing to give up. Which of my bills you'll be paying, and how else you would like to insert yourself into my family's life.

Today, this Senate will decide whether or not you trust me, your colleague - and all New Hampshire women and anyone who is pregnant - to make personal, private medical decisions

in consultation with their doctors, their family, their partners, and their faith. Or whether you think sitting here in this chamber today, you know better than I will in that terrible moment what care is best for my children.

Thank you, Mr. President."

Our fight will continue.

Best,
Rebecca

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