

Good evening. I am Amy Haselton Bolger, and I'm here to voice unequivocal support for the proposed Reproductive Liberty Amendment (PR5.)

This story begins in December 1977. I was 18, a college freshman, and madly, deeply in love for the very first time. Unfortunately, I was also facing an unplanned pregnancy following a broken condom.

My now-husband David and I talked, and luckily both agreed that abortion would be my best choice. The second person I confided in though was the campus clinic nurse, who blew my mind wide open when she said no abortion services were accessible in my home state of Maine - the closest clinic would be in Boston, two states away.

I was overwhelmed and I was scared.

And yet, I had many resources and advantages: a loving, supportive partner; two parents who listened and agreed to help; even, a car. Unlike so many people who seek to terminate a pregnancy, I didn't have to think for example about how I would pay; or about leaving a child or family member alone; or, about losing a day or days at work - perhaps even losing my job.

And still, I recall feeling fearful, apprehensive and very much alone.

Happily, this particular life event ended well. I experienced top-notch health care, followed by a comfy sleep in an adjoining hotel room (with those wonderful parents right next door). Then I returned to Maine to go forward with the rest of my young life.

At that time I felt thankfulness and relief - *not* regret. How fortunate was I, to have exercised the freedom and privilege to safely and responsibly act on a formative life choice. And my profound gratitude for always having had opportunities to optimize my sexual and reproductive health has only deepened over my long and fruitful life.

Please support Proposition 5 so that at least here in Vermont, others may choose as I did to experience safe and legal reproductive health care.

Thank you.