

Testimony before Ohio House Health Committee
H.B. 228, Abortion Ban
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I am Paula Westwood, Executive Director of Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati—the largest Right to Life chapter in Ohio and the birthplace of the state and national organizations. Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati supports HB 228, a total ban on abortion on demand.

Abortion throughout all nine months of pregnancy has been legal since the 1973 Supreme Court decisions *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. The "unalienable right to life" specified in the U.S. Declaration of Independence should have been indisputable. But the Supreme Court undermined this right, without the vote of the people.

Before this, abortion was a crime and the medical, religious, and political communities and public were overwhelmingly against it. Thirty-three years later, countless mothers and fathers have lost their hearts and peace as over 47 million babies have died, and abortion has contributed no positive good to our country in any way.

A growing number of states have proposed legislation to severely limit or altogether ban abortion.

With *bipartisan* support, South Dakota recently passed a ban. Ohio, Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Tennessee and Wisconsin have or have had some type of similar legislation proposed. (In a further example of voter support last week, all South Dakota legislators who voted against this ban lost their primary elections.)

According to 2004 abortion statistics from the Ohio Department of Health—the most recent available from Ohio abortionists—approximately 34,000 babies were aborted in Ohio in 2004. Rep. Tom Brinkman introduced HB 228 in the Ohio House of Representatives in April of last year—14 months ago and more than 39,000 babies aborted in this state during the wait for this hearing.

Opponents to HB 228 have used fear tactics to imply that the bill penalizes pregnant mothers and will mean more illegal abortions. HB 228 does *not* penalize pregnant

mothers. It does penalize abortion providers. This only makes sense if abortion is banned, because abortionists will be breaking the law.

As for the so-called "coat hanger" illegal abortions trumpeted years ago, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, former head of the National Abortion Rights Action League and personally responsible for 75,000 abortions, admits that the numbers were a lie (*Confession of An Ex-Abortionist*):

"...We persuaded the media that the cause of permissive abortion was a liberal enlightened, sophisticated one. Knowing that if a true poll were taken, we would be soundly defeated, we simply fabricated the results of fictional polls. ... We aroused enough sympathy to sell our program of permissive abortion by fabricating the number of illegal abortions done annually in the U.S. ... These false figures took root in the consciousness of Americans convincing many that we needed to crack the abortion law."

Some argue that abortion must at least be legal for pregnancies resulting from rape and incest. But it is inconsistent to have a total abortion ban and exclude these pregnancies.

Members of the organization Women Pregnant Through Sexual Assault (WPSA) have testified before Congress. They protest against abortion as the answer for rape and incest pregnancies, and they oppose the presumption that a person conceived in rape or incest is one-who-should-not-have-been-born.

Rape survivor Kathleen DeZeeuw testifies (*Victims and Victors: Speaking Out About their Pregnancies, Abortions and Children Resulting from Sexual Assault*, edited by David C. Reardon, Julie Makimaa and Amy Sobie):

"Having lived through rape, and having raised a child 'conceived in rape,' I feel personally assaulted and insulted every time I hear that abortion should be legal for rape and incest. I feel that we're being used to further the abortion issue, even though we've not been asked to tell our side of the story."

HB 228 also protects women facing life threatening physical health risks during pregnancy. HB 228 confirms the full humanity of an unborn baby and her mother, and in the event of serious health risks during pregnancy, requires physicians to deliver equal care and try to save both lives. Note: This was once standard, expected medical practice in America.

In the rare health instances when only one life can be saved, the mother's death is to be prevented unless she chooses her child's life over hers. In preventing the death of a mother, no intentional direct assault is to be made on her child through abortion to cause the baby's death. If in the process of preventing the death of a mother her baby tragically dies, the physician is not penalized.

Former U.S. Surgeon General, Jocelyn Elders, once bluntly stated, "We really need to get over this love affair with the fetus."

Thirty-three years of legalized abortion and the deaths of over 47 million unborn babies has brought Ms. Elders' rude statement to eerie fulfillment.

Our culture is increasingly hostile towards motherhood, except perhaps when having a child is a conscious, carefully crafted choice. In fact, it has been said that now the most dangerous place for a child is a mother's womb.

What America *needs* is to grow up. We need to get over the gullibility that began pre-*Roe* when a vocal minority duped judges and other leaders into believing that women are most fully female if we throw off the shackles of committed marriage, manipulate our reproductive cycles so that we do not bear children (nor even have monthly cycles), consider pregnancy a disease and motherhood a burden, and abort our babies.

Norma McCorvey, the plaintiff "Jane Roe" in the *Roe v. Wade* lawsuit, nailed this mess when she said: "I think it's safe to say that the entire abortion industry is based on a lie.... I am dedicated to spending the rest of my life undoing the law that bears my name."

Members of the Health Committee, I do not know why any of you are here, your reasons for entering politics, or how you were placed on this committee. But unlike any other legislation you will encounter, HB 228 bears a responsibility that exceeds elections, strategizing, or political parties. Many human lives depend on you.

Rev. Peter Marshall, former chaplain of the U.S. Senate, said (in a prayer offered March 10, 1948): "Let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us the determination to make the right things happen."

May you have the determination to make the right things happen now. Please vote HB 228 out of committee.

Paula Westwood
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