

**BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF OHIO
HB228
CHAIRMAN WHITE AND MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE**

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF JOBI DISHON

JUNE 13, 2006

My name is Jobi Dishon and I am from Thornville, Ohio.

On July 21, 1988, I had an abortion. I know this date well, as every year since my abortion I experience what psychologists diagnosed as double depression on and around this date. My anti-depressant medication didn't help my feelings of loneliness, hopelessness, dread, and despair during this time. I became physically and emotionally sick and just wanted to die.

I was 17 when I had my abortion and a recent high school graduate. My future plans were college, then marriage, a home, career and children. I went to Planned Parenthood and remember being told abortion was a simple, safe solution to an untimely pregnancy. I was not shown any fetal development pictures or told anything about fetal development. Rather, my baby was referred to as a "blob of tissue" which made the decision a lot easier. But, I also remember feeling very rushed, like my tissue was going to turn into a baby if I didn't hurry. I was never warned that there are physical, mental, or emotional risks attached to the abortion procedure. I think I have blocked most of the memories out of my mind regarding the abortion. Two haunting memories that have come back are, the abortion facility door being locked behind me as I went from the outside waiting room into the pre-op area and feeling so alone and scared. The next, were the haunting words "don't talk to anyone" as I was left with the rest of the waiting cattle to be herded to our next deadly stall.

For the next 15 years, shame and silence dominated my life. Abortion isn't something you talk about, even with the few people who knew about it. I had made the decision to abort my child, so I didn't feel I had the right to be sad. Abortion was not a quick simple solution; it is a choice that destroys lives, it is a choice I will always regret.

My abortion affected me in several areas: I was so emotionally debilitated that I was barely able to focus on college and spent most of the time numbing the pain through drugs, alcohol and unhealthy relationships. After college, I became a workaholic so I did not have to think about the abortion. I have developed an instinct to guard against future situations, which might bring that much pain again, and this has greatly hampered my ability to form and maintain close personal relationships, including my relationship with my husband. I have also suffered from low self-esteem; sleep disturbances, eating disorders, sexual dysfunction, and anniversary reactions as mentioned earlier. My abortion has also affected my parenting as I am now an extremely overprotective mother, and have anxiety over losing my child, as well as needing to be "the worlds most perfect mother." I am extremely thankful just to be a parent now, because, for years, I thought I had given up my only opportunity.

I really understood what I was missing after the birth of my son and will always have the memory of my child who could have been and should have been. People need to know the truth about the

devastation of abortion, not just that it kills a living baby, but that it hurts the women and many others directly and indirectly.

Through God's Grace and Mercy, I was able to grieve for my baby, rid myself of the guilt and shame involved in my abortion; and now, I share my personal story in hopes to help someone else not make the same mistake.