

Dear Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Celebrezze, and members of the Ohio House of Representatives Criminal Justice Committee,

I am writing to you today to express my sincere concern and opposition to SB 145. I am a physician, a mother of three, and a central Ohio native. I have been a practicing radiologist for 11 years. I graduated from Yale University and from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. I completed my residency and fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh and am board certified in Diagnostic Radiology.

I, like all physicians, am ethically required to provide the best possible care to patients, based on my training and experience. SB 145, by criminalizing the safest and most common method of terminating a pregnancy in the second trimester, forces physicians violate their own ethics to provide less safe care and needlessly endanger their patients.

Ethical people disagree about the morality of abortion. Clergy of many different religious traditions support a woman's right to choose to terminate a pregnancy. The decision to terminate a pregnancy is a personal and private medical decision that, like any medical decision, should be left to women to make for themselves, in consultation with their physicians and whomever else they wish to consult. And physicians must be free to provide the most appropriate, safest care they can, free of politically-motivated interference from the government, which does not have the requisite knowledge or training to make these decisions.

No one wants or expects an unplanned or crisis pregnancy, and it is my hope that as a society we can continue to reduce the numbers of unintentional pregnancies through access to free, effective contraception. But couples of all ages, from all walks of life, and from all socioeconomic strata can and do experience contraceptive failures as well as human failures. And there will always be lethal fetal anomalies and pregnant women with health crises for whom continuing a pregnancy will represent a grave threat to their survival. Banning the safest procedure for second trimester abortions will endanger these women. Some women in Ohio facing crisis pregnancies will not have the resources to travel out of state to find safe care and will take desperate, dangerous measures. Women who can't afford to take time off work or who will lose their jobs if they do, women who don't have someone to care for their children, women without money for gasoline or bus fare will reach for the wire coat hangers or knitting needles of the gruesome past or will seek out dangerous, back alley abortionists looking to profit from their desperation, should SB 145 be allowed to pass.

I strongly urge you to vote against SB 145 in order to protect Ohio's women and to allow physicians to practice ethically by providing the safest and best patient care.

Sincerely,

Kristin M. Foley, MD

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