

Testimony of Pastor Corey Shankleton, Proponent of S.B. 23

Ohio Health Committee March 19, 2019

Thank you, chairman, vice chairman and the members of this committee. As I stand here, more than 8 years after my initial appearance before this committee regarding the Heartbeat Bill, two biblical passages come to mind. First the story of the widow who continues to go before the Judge, time and time again, refusing to stop until justice prevails. As was with her case, it is the desire of all those gathered here today that at this time, justice truly will be served toward the most vulnerable of citizens, the unborn. The second passage comes from a time period shortly after the ascension of Christ. It seemed all the world would soon follow His disciples. The Pharisees of the time continued to take council on how they could squelch this upheaval. They plotted and schemed, they even discussed ending the life of some of the followers. At that point, a wise Jewish scholar arose with this advice; let it be, if it is not of God it will simply fade away...as many other situations have. However, if it is of God, don't be found fighting against it. After nearly a decade, not only has the Heartbeat Bill not faded away but it has gained support, which is saying much considering that from the very beginning this bill has been supported by both Democrats and Republicans alike. Despite the many challenges,

the bill presented before you this day is a stronger, better bill than when we began.

However, my appeal today is not only a moral appeal. This bill is good, solid legislation. First the detection of a heartbeat is a universal indicator of life. This bill allows for the law to be equally applied to all of Ohio's citizens. The current viability standard is extremely subjective and can vary from county to county, even hospital to hospital. So, using the heartbeat as an indicator of life aligns us with common sense medical practice that is universal in its application.

Though I believe life begins at conception, this bill answers those who fear rape or incest victims would not have any "option" should a total abortion ban be implemented. With this bill, victims would have nearly 2 months to look at the options and make a decision.

Many things have changed in these last many years since the Heartbeat Bill was introduced. Though I recently moved from Ohio, when I first stood here, the U.S. Supreme Court was not favorable to such cases. At that time, many argued saying who knows what a future court may look like? Today the make up of the court is much more favorable, with a distinct possibility it will continue to trend stronger that way. Previously the Governor of this state voiced his intent to veto and sadly did so

twice. Today Governor DeWine says send me the bill and I'll sign it. Ohio's pro-life groups have now lined up in support of this bill. So, it is, with this in mind, that I humbly ask for this committee to swiftly vote this bill from committee and champion its passage on the Senate floor. As has been declared many times in this bill's history, it is never the wrong time to do the right thing. I believe the time to pass this bill is now. Thank you for your consideration and your service to the Ohio citizens, both born and unborn.

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