

Cena Buchannon
Senate Bill 23 – Six-Week Abortion Ban
Opponent Testimony
Ohio House Health Committee
March 26, 2019

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Boyd, and Members of the Ohio House Committee,

My name is Cena Buchannon. I am a 71-year-old married woman with no children by choice.

My older brother had 6 children with no conscious thought, and I saw how the woman bears the responsibility for 95% of childcare. I have been a teacher and an IT specialist and am now retired. I have seen girls forced into hasty and unhappy marriages due to unplanned pregnancies. I have known women who had abortions, and, while it wasn't an easy decision, they were not traumatized, made infertile, or developed cancer as a result. I have known women who gave away their baby and were heartbroken. I am very much opposed to SB 23 because I firmly believe that more people need to think about whether or not they want to or should have children. Not everyone is suited by temperament, income, or health to have children. This bill could take away a woman's right to make her own medical decisions before she even knows she has a decision to make.

SB 23 assumes carrying a fetus to term is an easy thing. Then, if we don't want it or can't afford it, we can just give it up for adoption. For some it may be easy, but we can't all just drop one in the field and keep on plowing. Ohio has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the U.S. What about the women who develop problems in their pregnancy and are restricted to bed rest for the last few months? Will their employer pay them while they are off and save their jobs for them? Doubtful. Who feeds the children they already have in that case?

Most women who seek abortions already have one or more children. Women who are denied an abortion are more likely than those who receive an abortion to be living in poverty, receiving public assistance, and lacking full-time employment six months after the denial.

SB 23 also assumes that there will be prospective parents lining up to take any unwanted children. How many of them want children with serious medical problems and birth defects? The Governor has already stated we need more foster parents due to the opioid epidemic. How many of you would be ready to carry the child of your rapist or have your wife carry the child of her rapist? I personally can't think of anything worse. Or would you be fine if you or your wife died due to an ectopic pregnancy or had to wait months with an already dead fetus inside you/her.

I ask you to think carefully about these issues before voting on this bill while remembering 72% of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents think abortion should be legal. Do you want to waste their tax dollars fighting in court to defend this clearly unconstitutional bill? States that have passed similar bans on abortion have been struck down. So far, states whose pre-viability bans have been struck down have ended up paying more than \$1.2 million in taxpayer money—and that does not even include ongoing litigation.