

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

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

Each abortion is a tragedy - not only for the lost potential life, but also for the suffering that lead to those abortions. We must work to prevent abortion, but not with legislation like this six week abortion ban - rather by ameliorating poverty, unemployment, sexism, racism, drugs, and the social and spiritual ills that produce broken families and abortion - and by improving public and mental health, education, employment, and hope.

The issue here is the importance of maintaining safe and legal abortion services - not preventing abortions. They will occur regardless of what lawmakers do.

As a family physician in training, I met a woman who had been admitted repeatedly to the hospital with congestive heart failure due to infection of her heart that resulted from an illegal abortion that she obtained long before in 1974. Such complications were prevented later that year when safe and legal abortion became available.

Just last week, while discussing these hearings with a friend, she told me that she had had an abortion at age 16 when she was raped years before 1974. She was afraid that she was going to die! Imagine her terror and shame of being raped and then having an illegal procedure that nearly killed her.

Serving people in community health centers, shelters, and prison, I have been privileged intimate views of extraordinary people in very difficult situations that can make bearing a child virtually impossible. In such cases, it is essential to be able to provide, even if recommending against except as a last resort, a safe legal abortion.

Senate Bill 23 must be struck down, because if passed into law, it would not prevent abortion, and it would hurt women and their families. I urge you to vote no on Senate Bill 23.

Eric Fryxell, MD