

Amy Gerowitz
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,

Thank you for accepting this written testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 23.

My name is Amy Gerowitz and I live in Cincinnati.

I am a grandmother of 4. I treasure these grandchildren with all my heart. These children were all born into loving families well equipped to care for them. However, my life experience both professionally and personally compels me to provide testimony today.

SB 23 would require a test to detect fetal heart tones before an abortion is performed. If a heart-beat is detected, a woman could not have an abortion except in very narrow circumstances. This effectively eliminates a woman's right to an abortion. Most women do not know they are even pregnant at this point in a pregnancy. This bill does not even make exceptions in the case of rape or incest.

This bill endangers women's health and lives by interfering with a doctor's ability to treat a pregnant patient who is suffering a medical condition or life threatening emergency. This bill would criminalize the fundamental premise of a woman's relationship with her physician. Instead the physician could be subject to prosecution and civil lawsuits simply by providing needed health care to a woman in need of his or her best care.

In my professional life I worked with children and families. These children had the most severe and profound disabilities, and we treasured each of their lives. However, in one case, a very poor woman with a large family in Southern Ohio gave birth to a child who was functioning with only a brain stem. Death for this child was inevitable. He died within a month of his birth. The parents were forced to leave their other children for weeks while they sought care for this child, for whom there was no hope. If prenatal testing had shown this child's tragic path, why not allow this woman to have an abortion so she could grieve and then move on with nurturing her family and community.

Banning abortions does not eliminate abortions. It just makes them less safe and puts women at risk. Data from the World Health Organization shows that women will still seek abortions even when they are unsafe. Please do not put Ohio women in this terrible position.

I urge you to consider the well being of women and children and their families and communities and not enact this onerous and harsh law.

I truly believe with all my heart and soul and 70 years of life that only a woman can decide what is best for her and her family and ultimately the decision to have a child is up to her and she must have the right to choose. Most women yearn to have and love their children so a decision to have an abortion is never easy, but it is still her right.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

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