

**Jackelyn McKinnson**  
**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,

I am writing this on behalf of all Ohio women. I believe I am qualified as a nurse, woman, and mother, to protest Senate Bill 23.

Having a child has been the most challenging, life-changing, rewarding, formidable experience I've ever had. She was planned, and wanted. My uncomplicated, healthy pregnancy was incredibly difficult. I was one of the lucky ones, because pregnancy can be life threatening. We are at risk for blood clots, cardiomyopathy, fatal infections, uterine rupture and catastrophic blood loss. Labor, also, can be fatal to a mother and/or fetus. Placental abruption, amniotic embolus, cord prolapse are just a few of those risks. The postpartum period can also be deadly. A woman can die from postpartum pre-eclampsia, HELLP syndrome, infection, or hemorrhage. In addition to the very real physical dangers, the mental toll exacted from a woman cannot be overlooked. Mental health is just as important as physical, and we already lose too many mothers to postpartum depression and suicide. The only person qualified to decide if carrying a baby is worth dying for, is, in fact, the woman who may die.

Bodily autonomy cannot be compromised by the government. In our society, that is a given fact. I can't be forced to donate blood, or an organ, even if I'm the only match, no matter who the potential recipient would be. The same autonomy even applies after my death, consent is still required. Postmortem donation could save up to 8 lives, actual functioning, fully recognized, bearing rights, humans. And yet, no one can be forced, coerced or compelled to donate anything against their will.

That is exactly what this bill is attempting to do. It will take the rights of bodily autonomy away from women. We will be turned into state mandated gestation vessels, without the ability to decide our own fate, forcing us to risk our lives continuing a pregnancy.

In your desire to eliminate abortion, is Ohio also revamping sexual education standards? Comprehensive, fact based, sex-ed is a proven way to decrease unplanned pregnancies. Are you increasing Planned Parenthood funding for contraceptive distribution? That's also a proven way to decrease unwanted pregnancies.

The US has abysmal maternal mortality rates, among the worst of developed, "first-world" countries. Mental health care in America is also a sad state of affairs. Until we fix that, forcing women to risk their lives growing a fetus she isn't prepared to carry is merely state sponsored torture. What kind of prenatal care, postpartum follow-up, and children's health care are you offering the women you turned into gestation vessels? Is Ohio improving the safety nets for impoverished families, to provide food and housing support for the unwanted children you're trying to force into existence?

In the interest of all Ohioans, I ask you to vote no on SB 23.

Thank you,

Jackelyn McKinnson