

Opponent Testimony

Topic: SB 23

Ohio House Health Committee

Hearing Date: March 26, 2019

Witness: Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer (WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY)

General Minister & President, United Church of Christ

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Manning, Ranking Member Boyd, and House Health Committee members:

I write with great respect for the work of this committee, and in full support of a woman's constitutional right to make choices about her body.

I am now in my 31st year of ministry and serve in the highest office of our denomination, The United Church of Christ. Throughout these years, I have fought hard as a matter of religious imperative to protect the moral agency of women from an overreaching government.

As a trained all-options counselor, I have found myself giving solace, comfort, and counsel to countless women who have had to make hard choices. Those choices are made all the more difficult not just because of their personal circumstances, but because of judgment, pressure, and shame that others attach to it.

As a much respected theological voice within my faith, I will continue to resist any attempts to deprive women of their moral agency by the government. I am among a growing group of faith leaders who believe that women should be trusted to make decisions about their reproductive options, that there is little in our articulation of our faith that would restrict those choices, and that government should not take on the role of moral arbiter when women are confronted with those choices.

Mr. Chair, I thank you for taking the time to hear me. I appreciate the responsibility you and your committee all have as lawmakers. I ask you to please err on the side of trusting women to make moral decisions.

The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President
The United Church of Christ