

Marge Schaim
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 have been concerned about maternal health for many years. I have followed the news in the Cincinnati Enquirer. I was shocked that Cincinnati has a very high maternal mortality rate. Women of color have an extremely higher rate of death from child birth compared to white women. I was shocked that the care women of color received could be inferior to that given to white women.

Given this problem, all women need access to health care during this potentially dangerous time, not just women who are wealthy enough for their health insurance.

When I was a young girl my mother told me of when she went out with her father, a country doctor visiting patients. She learned that some women were getting abortions from uneducated people who were in it for the money. Many of the women died or were forever unhealthy afterwards. The mother in a family has a key role in feeding, caring for the health of her family, educating (think homework), and social and emotional guidance of her children. If the mother is dead or permanently ill due to a backstreet abortion, the whole family suffers long term. This changes the whole dynamics of the family. The children can't get the care we expect them to receive from their mother.

My niece who lives in another state recently had to get an abortion. She was well into her second pregnancy (well beyond six weeks) when the doctors discovered that her baby had a condition that would not let the child live until it was born, or the child would die soon after birth. She and her husband are a young couple with one child. Can you imagine how they would all suffer if this young mother had to carry the baby to term? My niece, her husband, and all our extended family were heartbroken that she had to terminate the pregnancy. But we were also relieved that my niece would not be forced to carry the pregnancy to term. She is now a young mother joyfully expecting her third child. This outcome might not have been possible if my niece was forced to carry the second pregnancy to term.

Would someone like my niece be able to find a doctor to give her a safe abortion in Ohio if HB258 and SB23 are enacted into law? I urge you to vote no on Senate Bill 23, the six-week abortion ban.