

Chair Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Minority Member Antonio, and members of the Ohio Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Jessica Cunningham. I am a mother of two young daughters and a newborn/portrait photographer based out of Cincinnati, Ohio. I am here today to strongly oppose the SB 155.

As a resident of Ohio, I am outraged by lawmakers considering a bill that would force my doctors to provide me with what the American Medical Association says is “simply false and not backed by science.” Situations already exist where doctors are required to provide anti-choice propaganda to their patients per the state requirements. I can imagine these doctors feel uncomfortable in these moments, residents feel uneasy, and lawmakers should be embarrassed.

Although it has been highly entertaining hearing Right to Life Leaders express the importance of choice, listening to anti-abortion politicians lecture about the importance of options, and making sure women have all the information out there, all of these anti-choice organizations and extremist politicians have been successful in hurting women and patients in my community. With the enforcement of the “gag rule,” legislation that is designed to deprive women of information has closed two planned parenthood clinics in Cincinnati – neither of which provided abortions. Thousands of patients right now are without access to affordable birth control, cancer screenings, and STI testing. Patients like me, who needed planned parenthood in a time when I was most vulnerable.

SB 155 is unconstitutional. It has been struck down by courts as illegal. As a taxpayer, I propose pro-life lawmakers spend our money in a way that is truly pro-life. Using money for real safe-sex education and allowing Ohioans access to affordable birth-control to prevent unplanned pregnancies. Affordable cancer screenings and STI testing in spaces that offer mercy rather than judgement. Maybe instead of expensive court fees we could address the child poverty epidemic in our state.

I ask you to consider my testimony today and vote no on SB 155. Thank you again.

I will take any questions you might have.