



Jessica Koehler

Senate Bill 28

Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee

December 12, 2017

Chairman Coley, Vice-chair Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni, and distinguished members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on SB 28. My name is Jessica Koehler and I am the Director of Legislative Affairs for Ohio Right to Life. On behalf of Ohio Right to Life and our statewide membership and affiliates, I am here today to speak in support of the Unborn Child Dignity Act.

Daily, Ohio Right to Life seeks to advance the fundamental right to life for every human person. We do this by proposing new protections that restrict abortions, but we also do this by proposing standards that reflect a culture that honors the dignity of the human person. This legislation falls into the latter category: While it does not restrict abortions, it does propose standards.

For decades, Ohio has required the humane disposal of aborted remains. In a 2015 investigation, Attorney General Mike DeWine found that the disposal practices of several Ohio abortion facilities were anything but humane. In fact, aborted remains of unborn children from two Planned Parenthood locations in Ohio ended up in a Kentucky landfill.

In a Facebook post responding to this announcement, Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio denied the findings, arguing that they treat these children in a “respectful manner.”



It sounds like we can agree (though perhaps to different ends) that these children are indeed worthy of respect. I hope we can all agree that disposal in a landfill in no way reflects a culture that honors the dignity of the human person.

By now, we all surely know and can agree to the biological reality of the unborn child. In videos released last summer, Planned Parenthood shared with the public the intricate biological development of the unborn child, describing the children's hearts, heads, livers, and lungs. The question at hand is not whether these children are human, but how we should treat them in light of their humanity.

Senate Bill 28 responds to this question by requiring that the unborn victims of abortion either be humanely buried or cremated. Additionally, it increases informed consent to mothers pursuing abortions by requiring full disclosure of the handling of their unborn child's remains.

According to Pew Research Center, "About half of Americans (49%) say that having an abortion is morally wrong, while 15% think it is morally acceptable and 23% say it is not a moral issue." Suffice to say, abortion is not something that most Americans take lightly. Even Planned Parenthood has suggested the importance of treating the unborn in a "respectful manner."

In protecting the dignity of the unborn child, we believe that this legislation will also preserve some of our own. Indeed, this legislation says just as much about our humanity as it says about the unborn child's. On behalf of Ohio Right to Life, I respectfully ask that you vote in favor of SB 28.