

Testimony of Diane Cartolano
S.B. 23
February 19, 2019

Thank you for hearing my testimony. I am here in support of SB 23 because I personally understand the destructive effects of abortion.

There are few things more painful to contemplate than the death of a child, except, perhaps, being complicit in their death, which is exactly what I did when I had 2 abortions.

I believed all the lies: “it” was just a “mass of tissue”, unable to feel pain; it was my “right”; it was legal, so it what could be wrong with it?; and worst of all, it would be over before I knew it and I could get on with my life.

Nothing could have been further from the truth.

I will never forget the horrific things I heard and saw, as my precious unborn children, were dismembered and suctioned out of what should have been the safest place in the world for them – my womb – into a cold glass jar on a table to my right. Nor will I forget the feelings of torment and unbearable regret when I realized the finality of my choices.

For years, I tried to suppress the truth of what I had done, but whether it happens on purpose or by accident, it’s

impossible to escape the impact of causing the death of another person.

Over time, I exhibited many common post-abortive symptoms such as: repressed (and unrepressed) anger, perfectionism; overwhelming shame and guilt; difficulty sleeping; depression; suicidal thoughts; financial difficulties; alcohol abuse; promiscuity; emotional indifference; debilitating insecurity and more. But the worst consequence by far, was being robbed of the fullness of joy I should have had at the birth of my daughters, after I was married several years later.

Euphemisms, no matter how clever or how often they are repeated, will never change the truth about something. And the truth is this: *abortion is an act of violence that unjustly ends the life of an innocent human being and wounds a woman for life.*

So, what makes humans valuable? Is it because of what we can do, achieve or contribute to society? No. All unborn lives have value, whether they are future “Einsteins” or future participants in the Special Olympics. If we confuse one’s value with one’s function, what’s to stop us from applying that same standard to those outside the womb?

Only 4 things distinguish the born from the unborn. Think of the acronym SLED: **S**ize, **L**evel of Development, **E**nvironment (or location) and **D**egree of Dependency. None of these criteria are acceptable for killing innocent persons who are

already born, so why are they acceptable for killing innocent unborn persons?

We didn't come from embryos. We once *were* embryos. From conception on, we are becoming more mature, not more human. A 6-inch journey down the birth canal does not magically turn us into human beings.

It is arrogant and ignorant to base a person's worth on arbitrary standards such as being: unwanted, unplanned, inconvenient, imperfect, unaffordable, or even being conceived through such heinous acts as rape or incest. The acts are heinous, not the children. The circumstances of one's conception have no bearing on the value of one's life.

Ironically, sexual assault victims who become pregnant, often feel they have no choice but to abort, even if they want to keep the child. Many also report feeling further victimized after an abortion. According to research (The Elliot Institute: www.afterabortion.org) 60 – 65% of abortions are either forced or coerced, often with the threat of violence or death for refusing to comply.

Rape and incest are both grave injustices that no human being should ever have to endure, but if a woman does become pregnant from sexual assault, the question then becomes: "How should a civilized society treat an innocent human being who reminds someone of a painful event?" There are always 3 people involved in these situations: the rapist, the victim and the unborn child. Which one is

acceptable to execute? Why is the child consistently the acceptable sacrifice for the crime?

Hardship never justifies violence and the violence of rape/incest doesn't justify the subsequent violence of abortion. Let's punish the perpetrator, not the victim and the innocent bystander. Incidentally, there is no such thing as a "kinder/gentler" abortion method to abort children conceived through sexual assault, or any children, for that matter.

We are rightly outraged by the abuse of children who are already born. Why then does our society tolerate, promote (and even celebrate) abortion, the ultimate form of child abuse?

Abortion doesn't empower women. It devalues, demeans and marginalizes them and their unborn children. In fact, the sex trafficking industry could not thrive without abortion, since it is the most effective way to keep its victims "in service" and therefore, profitable. It is hypocritical to condemn sex trafficking and condone abortion.

As legislators, if you are unwilling to support laws that protect the most vulnerable among us – the unborn – how can you be trusted to protect the rights of those you represent, who are already born?

I urge you to vote in favor of SB 23.