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Mr. Chairman, Senator Antonio, I've been sitting in the back of the room for all of these hearings. I've noticed that there's one key group of Ohioans that are underrepresented in this discussion. That group has also been maligned in consecutive legislative sessions by the multiple sponsors of the bill.

I'm a dad. My wife and I have two sons. You can tell I'm a dad because I'm constantly exhausted, I drive a rusty old mini-van, and I'm wearing New Balance shoes.

I've been a soccer coach, t-ball coach, and scout den leader. I've wiped butts. I've wiped noses. I've tied shoelaces and taught boys to tie their shoes. I've taught them to walk and ride a bike. I've cleaned up pee, cleaned up puke, and cleaned up Play-Doh. I've chaperoned camping trips, taught them how to use a pocket knife, build a pinewood derby car, and put a worm on a fish hook. I do it because I want my kids to learn these things, but also because there are kids whose fathers can't take time off work to chaperone the camping trip because they're laboring to put a coat on that kid's back and food on their table.

My latest endeavor has been a swim team dad. You don't normally coach swim team as a parent. You time. Have you ever timed a swim meet, Mr. Chairman? You stand on the side of a pool and run the stop watch. It feels just like it did when I worked in warehouses after high school. You're standing for 4 to 6 hours on concrete and your legs are just aching. But then that kid pops out of the pool and asks to see their time and they dropped 3 seconds... the look on their face is amazing. That's not even your kid because he's not swimming for another hour and another parent is going to be timing that lane, but that's ok because we're all standing there together on that hard concrete because we love our kids.

We sacrifice for our kids. My oldest son needs braces on his teeth, so there goes the down payment I had saved to replace my rusty old mini-van; but that's ok, because we sacrifice for our kids.

Parenting is hard work. Being a father is a sacred responsibility.

The sponsor of this bill, along with the sponsor of the previous version of this bill, was asked why they did not want to have exceptions for rape or incest added to the bill.

Their responses stung. Sen. Roegner, Rep. Hagan, and several other lobbyists for this abortion ban said: "We should not punish the child for the sins of the father."

There's two big problems here. First, you're punishing rape victims by denying them the option of an abortion. That point cannot be overstated, but has been made by many, many survivors of sexual assault in committee hearings over the years.

But the other point has yet to be addressed. So here I am, with a new point yet to be raised in any hearing on this abortion ban since 2011.

When people refer to rape as “the sins of the father,” you’re disrespecting fathers. You’re devaluing fatherhood, and all the sacrifices and achievements it represents.

Being a rapist does not make a man into a father. Forcefully depositing semen into someone doesn’t make you a dad.

That’s what this bill would do. That’s horrible for women, but it’s also a slander on every dad out there on the soccer field, on the t-ball diamond, and holding a stopwatch on the side of the pool.

We object.

When a woman or girl is raped, the person who committed the offense is a rapist. This committee should not grant him the honorific of “the father of her child.”

If she becomes pregnant, then it should be her decision on what to do. She has the right and the ability to keep the pregnancy. She has the right and the ability to end it.

As fathers, we don’t want this committee to elevate rapists into our ranks, and that’s what this bill would do.

Thank you for your time.