

Tiffany Stainfield
Senate Bill 23 – Six-Week Abortion Ban
Opponent Testimony
Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee
February 26, 2019

Hello, Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee,

My name is Tiffany Stainfield and I am a graduating medical student entering emergency medicine-- hopefully here in Columbus come June 2019. In 2014, I founded a chapter of Medical Students for Choice that continues to grow in numbers each year, and last year, I taught medical school as an adjunct faculty member. Notably, I have lived in Ohio my entire life. My current voting address is in Senator Gavarone's district near Toledo, as is my entire family's. Today, I'd like to share with you my testimony in opposition of SB 23.

I come here today to oppose this worn-out 'abortion ban,'
Knowing you all have previously decided your voting plan.
See, it's no surprise to anyone here giving their energy and time,
That we feel we're not heard, it's not worth a dime.

But I know that's not true, coming out here in force,
Without our voices, this bill would smoothly run course.
So, please, listen along as I profess what I need,
Before you go out there, and do your voting deed.

Despite all of us here, fighting to get your minds to sway,
You're predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

To start, I'd like to say there is a whole profession of expert physicians,
Those medical scientists and long-trained clinicians,
That blatantly outline why banning abortion is dangerous,
Under these really unreasonable "heartbeat" conditions.

Though a copy of the policy attached, exists,
I quote the American College of OB's and Gynecologists;
"ACOG opposes unnecessary regulations that limit...access to care.
The intervention of legislative bodies into medical decision making is inappropriate, ill-
advised, and dangerous."¹

Despite doctors like your own leaving no area of grey,
You're predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

Further, the Supreme Court of this mighty, great land,
Has already made it clear on abortion way beforehand.
The '16 decision on House Bill 2-- in it this quoted attribution;
"[Placing a] substantial obstacle in the path of women seeking [an]... abortion violates

¹ College Statement of Policy, As issued by the College Executive Board (2014, November). In *American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist*. Retrieved from <https://www.acog.org/-/media/Statements-of-Policy/Public/sop069.pdf?dmc=1&ts=20190221T1306513026>

the federal Constitution.”²

But here we go, again and again, running ‘round and ‘round,
Wasting your constituents tax dollars on nothing profound.
If the goal is to make it to the courts’ top with this bill,
There will be people like me and us, fighting it still.

Despite the federal-level families’ legal freedoms you betray,
You’re predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

Let’s mention the thousands of priests that’ve come to state,³
Naming the nuns, children, and women they’ve made procreate.
This is not a religious issue, pregnancy can happen to us all,
Fun fact; the majority of women getting abortions, under Christianity they fall.⁴

With this bill, it doesn't matter the holy God that you trust,
Following Separation of Church and State, definitely you must.
It's not the God I know that leaves women with such burden,
It's his love and his kindness- aren't we all here forgiven?

Despite the proponents, the church has nothing legal to say,
You’re predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

Pay no mind to the hundreds of thousands of men that will be affected,
To fines, payments, and even incarceration subjected.
Because the women they impregnate who are forced to birth now,
Will actually need help, but government says find it elsewhere, somehow.

Most disturbing of all-- victims of incest, domestic violence, trafficking, and rape,
Will be forced to live out their terrors and fears without escape.
Imagine your beautiful, innocent 15-year-old daughter or grandkid
Getting forcefully knocked up and not having the option I did.

Despite 1 in 4 women receiving abortions⁴ and behind each is a man if you may,
You’re predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

Back to the part about that decision and choice I had,
I was young, in college, and my ex-boyfriend didn’t want to be “dad,”
So he came to my house uninvited and with \$500 in cash,
Telling me with “you better fix this,” leaving me alone, out like trash.

We had earlier broken up, but about 5 weeks after,

² Liptak, A. (2016, June 28). Supreme Court Strikes Down Texas Abortion Restrictions. *The New York Times*, p. A1. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/28/us/supreme-court-texas-abortion.html?_r=0

³ Kelly, L. (2018, August 15). Catholic Church used children fathered by priests as leverage to silence victims. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/aug/15/catholic-church-used-children-fathered-priests-sil/>

⁴ Fact Sheet: Induced Abortion in the United States (2018, January). In *Guttmacher Institute*. Retrieved from <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/induced-abortion-united-states>

The career plans for my life had met the incinerator.
Because of Planned Parenthood in Cincinnati on Auburn Avenue,
A doctor, an advocate, a proud woman stands before you.

Despite the backbones of people like us and all the truth we convey,
You're predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

After all of that, let's talk about what this bill is really about,
Decoupling the act of sex from procreation, no doubt.
Further, Trump's USA can't even handle the idea of birth control,
Because it lets women actually enjoy sex without paying the toll.

Ya know, abortion is a product of reckless ejaculation,
A doctor once told me, a result of the direct causation.
If we made it more affordable, accessible to be protected,
Sex-educated people, to an abortion, would not be directed.

Despite avoiding the *real* problem of keeping unwanted pregnancy at bay,
You're predictable and are going to pass this bill, anyway.

That's probably my time, and I know this was way different,
But to come here and be heard is exactly what I meant.
The last time I was here to give politicians my spiel,
Most were on their phone, which was absolutely not the deal.

I know Senate is here to understand and try to listen,
Actually protecting the land's law and to not wear it thin.
Thank you for paying attention, I hope this is the last time
I come here to object 'bans,' but with them I'll always chime.

Despite what you think, we're all loving people in to weigh,
Won't you change your mind on the bill, even maybe someday?

Remember our faces, and remember our story
We're not here for rejection, but more for the glory!
To know that people from all over, of all colors, shapes, and sizes,
Demand access to abortion and with this, the movement rises!

We won't go away and to your constituents we'll tell,
About the vote you make now, on which side you fell.
This is not about you, or what to do with your voice,
It's about uplifting women who need access to choice!

Despite all of our pleas, concerns, and the testimony we pay,
Will you *ever* consider a female's control over her body, any day?

I urge you to vote no on Senate Bill 23, the dangerous six-week abortion ban.

Sincerely,
Tiffany Stainfield

College Statement of Policy¹

As issued by the College Executive Board The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

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ABORTION POLICY

The following statement is the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' (ACOG) general policy related to abortion. The College's clinical guidelines related to abortion and additional information are contained in the relevant Practice Bulletins, Committee Opinions, and other College documents.

Induced abortion is an essential component of women's health care. Like all medical matters, decisions regarding abortion should be made by patients in consultation with their health care providers and without undue interference by outside parties. Like all patients, women obtaining abortion are entitled to privacy, dignity, respect, and support. The College continues to affirm the legal right of a woman to obtain an abortion prior to fetal viability. ACOG is opposed to abortion of the healthy fetus that has attained viability in a healthy woman. Viability is the capacity of the fetus for sustained survival outside the woman's uterus. Whether or not this capacity exists is a medical determination, may vary with each pregnancy and is a matter for the judgment of the responsible health care provider.

While ACOG recognizes and respects that individuals may be personally opposed to abortion, health care providers should not seek to impose their personal beliefs upon their patients nor allow personal beliefs to compromise patient health, access to care, or informed consent. Informed consent is an expression of respect for the patient as a person; it particularly respects a patient's moral right to bodily integrity, to self-determination regarding sexuality and reproductive capacities, and to the support of the patient's freedom within caring relationships.

A pregnant woman who may be ambivalent about her pregnancy should be fully informed in a balanced manner about all options, including raising the child herself, placing the child for adoption, and abortion. The information conveyed should be appropriate to the duration of the pregnancy. There is an ethical obligation to provide accurate information that is required for the patient to make a fully informed decision. The professional must avoid introducing personal bias. Medical knowledge and patient care are not static. Innovations in medical practice are critical to the advancement of medicine and the improvement of health. Medical research is the foundation of evidence-based medicine and new research leads to improvements in care.

ACOG is opposed to laws and regulations that operate to prevent advancements in medicine. For example, laws that prohibit health care providers from following current evidence-based protocols for medical abortion disregard scientific progress and prevent providers from offering patients the best available care. Likewise, the state and federal laws that prohibit specific surgical abortion procedures disrupt the evolution of surgical technique and prevent physicians from providing the best or most appropriate care for some patients.

If abortion is to be performed, it should be performed safely and as early as possible. ACOG supports access to care for all individuals, irrespective of financial status, and supports the availability of all reproductive options.

ACOG opposes unnecessary regulations that limit or delay access to care. The intervention of legislative bodies into medical decision making is inappropriate, ill advised, and dangerous. ACOG opposes the harassment of abortion providers and patients. ACOG strongly supports those activities which prevent unintended pregnancy.

Approval by the Executive Board General Policy