

**Anne Kmieck**  
**Opponent Testimony**  
**Senate Bill 23**  
**Ohio Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee**  
**Wednesday, February 26, 2019**

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee, Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Anne Kmieck. I am a high school teacher from the Cleveland area. I strongly oppose Senate Bill 23.

Here is my story. When I was in college, I felt sure that I was pregnant. I was devastated. Despite being indoctrinated by the Catholic Church about the evils of abortion, there was absolutely no way I was going to commit to the pregnancy. I was married, we had no money, and I realized that for me the marriage was over, we had grown apart. At that time, no one knew that my ex-husband was at the beginning of a long struggle with mental illness. Even though abortion was legal, I felt that if the pregnancy didn't end, my only option was suicide. I need to add, that never before or since had I ever contemplated suicide. I prayed to God to end my pregnancy. Many weeks, then another month went by, and finally, relief came when I began to menstruate. God had answered my prayers. But did she? Why would God answer my prayers and seemingly not the prayers of other women?

The following is a brief description of my understanding of abortion today from multiple perspectives:

1. First of all, I had wondered what proof do we have that God is against abortion. There is no long-standing tradition that connects the Bible with the complete prohibition of abortion on either moral or criminal grounds. These prohibitions commenced in the nineteenth century (Pope Pius IX, *Apostolicae Sedis*, 1869 and in the US, abortion was a felony in all states by 1900). In other words, Roe v. Wade ended only 72 years of total criminalization in the U.S.
2. Second, we now know that the female reproduction system rigorously assesses its eggs. This begins at birth at the rate of 11,000 oocytes per month. Assessment continues through puberty, conception, implantation, and gestation. I now believe that my zygote was spontaneously rejected the way 10 – 15% of zygotes/embryos are after implantation in the endometrium. This means that more than half of zygotes are spontaneously rejected since only one out of two implant in the first place.
3. Third, did women feel remorse before the 19<sup>th</sup> century? Did they suddenly feel remorse after abortion was criminalized? You cannot identify a woman who has had an abortion. Today we know that nearly one of three women have had or will have a medical abortion during her lifetime. Most women who have had abortions do not have regrets. Most are loving, competent, well-adjusted mothers, spouses, leaders, and represent communities across faiths, classes, and other identifiers. Since Roe v. Wade, reliable data across many studies show there is no evidence of widespread diagnosable clinical disorders following abortion. I never felt guilt or shame rejecting my pregnancy.

In conclusion, I cannot find evidence that God is against abortion if female biology is designed to promote best reproductive outcomes, and many women of faith, like me, do not feel shame or guilt for rejecting a pregnancy. I am appalled at the wholesale attempt, once again, to deny women's God-given agency in respect to our moral decisions. I stand before you to say I did not reject a person; I did not reject a being with a soul, and I did not reject a human being. Women across this nation have affirmed this over and over. It is repugnant that a state wants to force pregnancies on women who cannot commit. This is no different than forcing abortions on women who accept their pregnancies. Those of you who are obsessed with making abortion illegal again, where is your love for Ohio's children, our children? Ohio's record has nothing to boast in the way of adequately funding education, healthcare, and safety for each child in this state. Is this about love of children or about hate of women? I don't see love of children here, because embryos are not children. Women and children are the people. We are the people of this great state. We are the ones that suffer.

For these reasons, I ask you to consider my testimony and vote no on Senate Bill 23 bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

I will now take any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Anne Kmieck