

Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Nickie, and Members of the Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee.

My name is Carrie Coisman and I am a reproductive justice organizer with the Fight4HER campaign. I come before you as a lifetime Ohioan who was raised in body and mind in Lexington, Ohio, on a county line road between Richland and Morrow counties, in Larry Obhoff's district, a cosponsor of this dangerous bill. This is a place without an abortion clinic and with abstinence-only education. The private school where I found my voice was so committed to its values that it would expel a student without any further consideration if that student became pregnant. Even a doctor's note for a routine yearly visit from an OBGYN's office was enough burden of proof to be removed.

At this particular evangelical high-school, we would host chapel services where we celebrated the birthday of aborted fetuses. There were cupcakes, prayers, and general revelry due to our moral superiority. And while my heart and mind knew that this was wrong, social conditioning is stronger than most anything on the body of a 16 year old woman who has been trained her entire life to be silent. To be silent, but to protect her body from its innate sin through modesty.

However, I was sexually assaulted the summer of 2010. The fear of being pregnant was so profound, I passed out in the shower one afternoon after my beloved volleyball practice, panicking that my dreams of escape to a place where I could be in my own mind and think my own thoughts were now out of reach.

I spent hours on Google while my mother was sleeping looking up ways to self-abort, I didn't know if I just had to run harder at volleyball practice or if I needed to take a large dose of morphine from my late grandfather's stash. All I knew is that I would never leave that county line road if I was pregnant. I would not graduate from my high school. I would not go to college.

By some stroke of luck and the nature of biological timing, I ended up not being pregnant. But I will never forget the shaking anxiety of knowing that I would be expelled from school, ostracized from my family, and trapped in a town I was desperate to leave.

As I have grown into my political and professional self and moved away, I have not forgotten that there are still people suffering from that lack of access here in Ohio and in my hometown. Without access to a clinic, counseling, or options, people are being trapped in cycles of poverty, abuse, isolation, and shame. I have seen dreams shattered and lives ruined due to the threat of ostracization and lack of access for the people who stayed in a town riddled with the opiate epidemic and the loss of our manufacturing sector.

Accessing the abortion pill through telemedicine gives people an option that is safe, accessible, inexpensive, and can be done privately, as proven in a study entitled "Medication Abortion Provided Through Telemedicine in Four U.S. States." in the August 2019 issue of *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, the most highly esteemed medical journal on obstetrics and gynecology. This study was written and conducted by medical professionals, not conservative politicians.

Safety, accessibility, affordability, and privacy are incredibly important to conservative and rural communities where progressive advocacy services are lacking, due to anti-choice legislation such as SB 260. The closest abortion clinic from my home address of the night that I spent Googling: 59.6 miles. I was driving a 1993 Pontiac Gran Prix with squeaky brakes and horrible gas mileage. Price of gas in 2010: \$2.35 a gallon. And it would take almost a tank to get there and back. A tank of gas was worth about a quarter of my income from my summer job at a truckstop Wendy's where I was making \$7.39 an hour. Alongside people who were raising children they had as teenagers. Access to a telemedical abortion and counseling would have made all of those data points mute.

So I urge you, to vote no on this bill, so that young people who love life and learning, who have dreams of a small liberal arts college in suburban Columbus, who want to work towards a more just and equal future, can. Vote no so that those people can choose to use telemedicine services to privately exercise their right to that future and grow into their true and authentic selves.

I'd like to thank Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Nickie, and Members of the Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee for hearing my testimony and I will now take questions.