

Chairman Manchester and other members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of Senate Bill 157. My name is Molly Ross, and I am the president of the Students for Life of America chapter at the University of Toledo.

I am here before you today because I believe that infanticide is wrong. I believe that murder at any stage of life is wrong. And I believe that doctors should be legally required to provide reasonable medical care to any person under their care. Senate Bill 157 will require doctors to provide reasonable medical care to infants, who survive an abortion procedure. It would also require doctors to report infants who are born alive despite this procedure. During a late term abortion, the preborn child is given a lethal injection. Early delivery is then induced, and the mother gives birth to, what the doctor hopes, is a dead child. However, between 2003 and 2014, the CDC reports at least 143 cases of the preborn child surviving the injection and being born alive.

The world's youngest infants to survive premature delivery were born just shy of 22 weeks. While not all of these infants survive, there is a chance that doctors can save a healthy, premature child. The child's chances of survival increase week by week.

In Ohio, abortions are illegal when performed after 20 weeks. The exceptions to this rule are in cases of fetal abnormality or where the life of the mother is at risk. Despite this rule, 113 abortions happened in Ohio in 2020 after 21 weeks gestation. We have no way of knowing how many, if any, preborn infants survived the abortion procedures. Senate Bill 157 would enable us to know how many of these infants survived the abortion procedures.

Abortion is the termination of a pregnancy. Once a child, dead or alive, has been delivered, the abortion is over. The pregnancy has ended. The abortion was successful. If the child survived, we are no longer talking about a fetus, embryo, or in-utero baby. We are talking about a living infant, a citizen of the United States of America, who should be entitled to the same legal protection as every other person.

We should not need this law. In the United States, homicide and infanticide are both illegal and considered felonies. In the end, this bill has nothing to do with abortion. This bill does not ask for any changing of Ohio's abortion laws. All it does is reaffirm laws that are already in place, which make infanticide illegal. Several states, including Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas, already have similar laws in place.

At 21 weeks gestation, the baby's heart has been beating for almost 18 weeks, pumping blood with DNA entirely unique and separate from that of his or her mother. By 21 weeks, the preborn child can move in his or her mother's womb. At this point, it looks like a miniature, newborn infant.

Let me say exactly what Senate Bill 157 would prevent. A preborn baby can survive a late-term abortion. This is a fact. When born alive, doctors have killed these young infants or allowed them to die of neglect. In 2003, a Florida abortionist failed to kill a baby at 23 weeks gestation. This infant was thrown into a trash can and died. Former abortionist Kermit Gosnell performed late-term abortions and, when the infant survived, stabbed the infant through the back of the head

with a pair of scissors. There have been cases of abortionists leaving infants alone to die or, as in the case of Gosnell, actively ending the life of the premature baby.

There are many, who say that abortion survivors are just pro-life propaganda. As I mentioned above, this is demonstrably false. There are abortion survivors among us, bearing witness to the fact that abortion survivors are not just potential humans; they are humans. In 1977, Melissa Ohden's mother underwent a saline abortion in Iowa. The abortion was designed to kill the in-utero baby through chemical burns from a saline solution injected in the amniotic fluid. Once the doctor believed the baby dead, Ohden's mother had to deliver her dead child. Ohden was born alive and left for dead by the doctor. She is alive today because a nurse felt she could not stand by while a living, moving, breathing newborn screamed herself to death. Today, Ohden is a living testament to the humanity of abortion survivors. That doctor should have been required to treat Ohden as any other patient. All this bill does is require doctors to provide reasonable care to these newborns.

You do not need to oppose abortion to support this bill. You need to oppose infanticide. I am here today to urge you to vote in support of Senate Bill 157 to ensure that prematurely born babies, regardless of manner of delivery, are given an equal chance at life. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.