

Ohio House of Representatives Testimony: In Support of S. B. No. 157

Elizabeth Bach

Ohio House of Representatives Hearing on S. B. No. 157
(For the House Committee on Families, Aging, and Human Services)
November 18, 2021

Good morning Chairman Manchester, Vice Chair Cutrona, Ranking Member Liston, and all other members of this committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today, in support of Senate Bill 157. My name is Lizzy Bach, and I am a second-year student involved in the pro-life movement at Bowling Green State University.

As a student, and as a future educator, I believe that all life is precious, from conception to natural death. I firmly believe that whether a child is wanted or unwanted, infanticide is not the answer. Senate Bill 157, that requires physicians to, “provide post-birth care to the newborn, in accordance with prevailing and acceptable standards of care,”¹ is a step in the right direction, to ensure the dignity of every child in the state of Ohio, and the United States.

First, by holding physicians accountable through reports on each incident of an infant born alive as a result of a failed abortion, we can gain more accurate data on the frequency of such instances. According to the bill in its current form, “A completed child survival form is confidential and not a public record...”² These records are vital to ensuring the accountability of physicians involved in the abortion process, while protecting the identity of mothers involved. Through the use of these records, we can make sure survivors, such as Melissa Ohden and Gianna Jessen are heard, and the unique circumstances of their birth are acknowledged.

¹ Ohio Congress, Senate, *Regards child born alive after attempted abortion*, S 157, 134th General Assembly, Regular Session, introduced in Senate April 13, 2021, https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/solarapi/v1/general_assembly_134/bills/sb157/PS/02/sb157_02_PS?format=pdf

² Ibid.

Therefore, by accounting for those born alive as result of failed abortions, we are able to better represent and aid this largely forgotten population.

Considering the implications of a failed abortion, a child born alive should be granted equal rights, including the most basic rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In an article published by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1981, Dr. Willard Cates, then chief of abortion surveillance for the CDC in Atlanta, estimated that 400 to 500 abortion live births occurred every year in the United States.³ With the frequency of failed abortions resulting in the live-birth of the child, special protections should be in place, to ensure that each child receives proper medical care, no matter the circumstances of their birth. In addition, in order to combat the “high rates of infant mortality”⁴ addressed previously by opponents of this bill, by ensuring the health and safety of those born as a result of failed abortions, we can furthermore ensure the continued commitment to reducing infant mortality in the state of Ohio. By protecting those born as a result of a failed abortion, as well as holding physicians accountable to their patients, whether they are born according to “normal” circumstances, or from a failed abortion, we can foster an environment that protects the dignity of human life.

In conclusion, by supporting Senate Bill 157, you only need to oppose infanticide, and support the dignity of human life. I urge you to vote in support of this bill, to ensure that the countless voices of abortion survivors are heard, that future infants born as result of failed abortions receive the proper protections and care under the law, and that by continuing to uphold the rights guaranteed to all children, regardless of the circumstances surrounding their birth, we

³ Jeffries, Liz. “Abortion.” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 2, 1981. Accessed November 16, 2021. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CHRG-OCONNOR/pdf/GPO-CHRG-OCONNOR-5-5.pdf>

⁴ 3rd Hearing on Senate Bill 157, General Assembly 134. 1 (2021) (testimony of Lauren Blauvelt-Copelin)

may reduce the infant mortality rate in this state. Thank you for your time, and for allowing me the opportunity to speak with this committee today.