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**Testimony in Support of HB378
House Health Committee
March 8, 2022**

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Liston and committee members:

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony in support of HB378, known as the "Abortion Pill Reversal Act", for today's hearing.

One of the major objectives we have as pro-life advocates is to educate about life issues and to advocate for the protection of innocent human lives from conception through natural death. In my former capacity as executive director of Right to Life of Northeast Ohio (now retired), I have taught countless numbers of sidewalk counseling classes to train individuals in peaceful sidewalk counseling procedures in an attempt to influence not only the women going into an abortion facility, but also to influence the general public passing by into changing hearts and minds to stand up for life. One of the key components of the classes that I teach is to emphasize to the attendees that when a woman makes the decision to get an abortion, it is very rarely about the child that she is carrying. More often than not, it is all about the woman herself and the situation that a pregnancy or carrying a child to birth would be for her. Women entering abortion facilities do not want to hear people telling them that they are killing their child. That's the last thing they are thinking about or even want to think about. But we need to be cognizant of the fact that once a woman *does* have an abortion, very often this is the **ONLY** thing she can think about! It might not be an immediate thought, and could be days, weeks or years down the line, but it affects the mental health of most women at some point in time. The feelings of relief that she seeks very often turn to feelings of guilt.

The United States National Library of Medicine and the National Center for Biotechnology Information has published articles relating to numerous studies that have tried to prove that abortion is not harmful to a woman's state of mind. However, the flaws of these studies include the lack of controlled studies where abortions are randomized as a treatment for pregnancy, and not considering the woman's state of mind before the pregnancy. Many studies also revealed that women who had elective abortions suffered higher psychological trauma than women who gave birth to stillborn children. In fact, emotional distress was found to be higher among women that had repeat abortions.

In 1992, the Journal of Social Issues dedicated an entire issue to the psychological effects of induced abortion. In an overview of the contributors' papers, the editor, Dr. Gregory Wilmoth, concluded that *"there is virtually no disagreement among researchers that some women experience negative psychological reactions post abortion."* As I said previously, some symptoms may appear immediately following an abortion, but others may not appear for years. The reality that they have killed their child exhibits itself in symptoms that may include but are not limited to: increases sexual activity, increased use of drugs or alcohol, lying or being deceptive, crying and feeling sad, suicidal thoughts, inability to concentrate, and being increasingly pessimistic about the future.

Once a woman submits to a surgical abortion, there is no going back. However, when a woman chooses to instead undergo a chemical abortion, which comprised 47.9% of all abortions in Ohio in 2020, she has the ability to reverse her decision. The unfortunate reality of most abortion clinics, however, is that they rarely tell their clients about all of the physical risks and consequences, much less the psychological risks and consequences of the procedure that they are about to undergo. HB378, once enacted, would mandate that women who choose a chemical abortion would be notified of the possibility that the abortion could be reversed after taking the first pill of the two-dose protocol. Common sense should prevail here not only to protect the life of the innocent preborn child, but to protect the mental and physical health of the woman who may realize the consequences of just what she has done after taking the first pill. Let these women have a chance to save not only the life of their child, but to help protect her mental health.

I urge you to vote to pass the Abortion Pill Reversal Act.