

**Ohio SB 159 Legislature Testimony**  
**Aisha Taylor**  
**February 27, 2024**

The pregnancy test was positive. I fell to the floor and cried. "Jesus!" I screamed over and over again! What was I going to do? I just quit my job to be a full time entrepreneur, so the timing wasn't right. Plus I was afraid to tell him because in the back of my mind, I knew if I continued the pregnancy I would be a single mom.

When I worked up the courage to tell him, "I'm pregnant." I could barely get the words out before he immediately suggested I have an abortion. "It's not like we are playing for keeps," he said. I was devastated, but not at all surprised by his response.

A couple weeks later, I went to the doctor and the doctor confirmed I was pregnant with twins, and I cried.

I tried to move forward with the pregnancy so I continued with my doctor's appointments. During one of my doctor's appointments, my sonographer noticed how much I was crying so she told me about a local pregnancy center. She didn't work at the pregnancy center, but she knew about the services and was able to share them with me. I remember she said, "They have diapers, wipes, baby formula, baby food, baby clothes, and counseling and everything is free." I looked at her and replied "really?" I exhaled a large sigh of relief.

I was so excited about the services at the local pregnancy center so I scheduled an appointment. I wish I could say that I had decided to continue my pregnancy when I made that call. But I hadn't yet. I wanted to, but I didn't know if I could. My desire to please him was too strong and his certainty that I should have an abortion was overwhelming.

There was one particular day when the pressure and fear was so bad that I picked up the phone to call to make an abortion appointment. But God! The provider didn't answer the phone. So I never made the appointment! I ended up going to church that evening, and heard the pastor speak about maintaining your faith during seasons of storms and he said, "Never make permanent decisions in temporary times." That's when I realized abortion was permanent, but what I was going through was temporary. I decided to continue with my pregnancy.

As I continued the pregnancy the pressure to abort intensified, and I was trying with every fiber of my being to hold on to the decision for life for my unborn twins. But I was getting weak. One day I was crying and needed someone to talk to. I knew the pregnancy center was closed, but I called anyway and pleaded with the Lord that someone would answer the phone. Someone did! The woman listened to me cry and reassured me that everything was going to be ok.

When I found the pregnancy center, I was an emotional wreck and had no idea what to do or how to prepare for motherhood. Very few people at that time even knew I was pregnant or knew what I was going through. I believe that the women at that pregnancy center were like angels on earth for me. The women at the pregnancy center stood with me when I was trying to find hope. They helped me to find the courage to say yes to the pregnancy that I wanted even though I still struggled with both the pressure to abort and the fear about what this would mean for my life, dreams, and future since I would be a single mom.

Scripture says in Psalm 127:3 that “Children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.” This means that children are a gift, a blessing, and a legacy. When I understood that, I knew that having goals and dreams isn’t incompatible with motherhood and that I could thrive even though I experienced an unplanned pregnancy and would be a single mom.

Therefore, if there is anyone listening who may have experienced an unplanned pregnancy, I want to let you know that you will make it. Your kids will give you more drive, passion, and encouragement to move forward to thrive, to achieve what seems impossible.

I’m so grateful for the ladies at the pregnancy center and I thank Jesus that he brought them into my life. The free resources such as the parenting classes, counseling, diapers, wipes, baby food, equipment, and referrals for free car seats helped me so much. But, what sticks out to me the most was the love, encouragement, and the safe place to just cry during one of the most difficult times of my life.

I remember when I was transitioning out of the Parenting program at the Center, I said “I can’t repay you for everything you’ve done because my twins are alive. But what I will do is pay it forward.” I pray that this testimony today will help bring awareness to the important work that

these centers do and to increase support for these centers. I ask for your support for Senate Bill 159.

Thank you for your time.