



Laura Sullivan, JustChoice
HB 324 Opponent Testimony

Chairperson Schmidt, Vice-Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Dr. Somani, thank you. My name is Laura Sullivan, a Licensed Independent Social Worker at JustChoice and provider of telehealth across Ohio. I am testifying today on my own behalf in opposition to H.B. 324. This bill damages the provider-client relationship and disregards medical expertise by delaying access to essential, safe medications like Mifepristone.

In the past decade we have seen the use of technology to improve health care access and outcome in rural areas. Despite what law makers would like us to believe reproductive health care is no different than other forms of health care.

Let me tell you about my client, Maya, an 18 year old sexual assault survivor living in rural Appalachia. Her story is a blueprint of systemic barriers denying freedom to the most vulnerable.

To reach a Doctor, she must beg for rides—a humiliating process highlighting the policy failure of neglected rural infrastructure. Her pregnancy was a daily trauma, and the logistical barriers of getting to a distant clinic felt painfully heavy.

Maya was connected with us and we were able to share information with her about accessing medication abortion online via telehealth. Telehealth is a lifeline for folks living in rural Ohio for many basic health care needs including primary care, mental health and reproductive care.

With information and access to medication abortion, Maya was empowered to manage healthcare on her own terms.

HB 324 is designed to sever that lifeline.

This bill isn't about safety. It weaponizes the existing burdens of geography, poverty, and social isolation and adds one more obstacle.

H.B. 324 is yet another attempt to overturn the will of voters -- using the power of law to deny people control over their bodies and futures. While targeted at reproductive care, it will undoubtedly restrict access to vital preventative and mental healthcare in regions that rely on telehealth.

This bill is coercion. It attacks the most vulnerable by denying them a private, safe path. I urge you to see Maya and vote no.