

Opponent Testimony for House Bill 324
House Health Committee
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Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Dr. Somani, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today in strong opposition to House Bill 324.

My name is Mariah Crawford. I am a 25-year-old registered nurse and resident of Warrensville Heights, and the anti-abortion bills being considered at our Statehouse are not an abstract political debate for me. They are a direct threat to the kind of careful, personal decision I had to make for my own life and future—a decision that this bill targeting medication like Mifepristone would make more dangerous for everyone.

Last November, I discovered I was pregnant. While my partner was supportive, my family was not. I was called names and told God would be angry with me. Despite this immense pressure, I knew in my heart I was not ready to be a mother. As a nurse, I understand the weight of responsibility, and I knew I could not bring a child into the world until I was financially and emotionally prepared to provide the life they would deserve.

But when I tried to find the care I needed, I hit a wall I couldn't scale: the cost was \$850, and I didn't qualify for financial assistance. I felt utterly defeated. It was only through my own resourcefulness that I found a safe, affordable option online. For \$35, I received medication that allowed me to end my early pregnancy in the privacy of my own home. It was a difficult and painful experience, but it was my choice, and one I remain at peace with.

The bills our legislators are proposing now would seek to block the very avenue that allowed me to stay safe. They aim to restrict access, increase costs, and insert politicians into the most private decisions of our lives. House Bill 324 would make it harder to access abortion pills, even though they're FDA-approved, safe, and widely used. I look at this bill and know, with chilling certainty, that if it had been in place, it would not have stopped my abortion. It would only have made it more difficult, more dangerous, or outright impossible for someone without my resources or medical knowledge.

My story is the proof they refuse to see. It shows that when someone is determined to maintain control over their own body and future, they will find a way. House Bill 324 is not about patient safety. It's a thinly veiled attempt at a backdoor abortion ban to hinder access to essential health care. This bill won't stop abortions; they only stop safe ones. They punish women for making the responsible choice for their own circumstances.

I urge our lawmakers in Columbus to see my face, to hear my story, and to stop legislating our bodies. Trust Ohioans, like me, to make the deeply personal decisions that are right for us, our families, and our futures. Vote NO on House Bill 324.

Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.