

STORK Act

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 87, The Strategic Tax Opportunities for Raising Kids (STORK) Act.

As a mother of 4, I am well versed in the cost of expenses during pregnancy/gestation. Prenatal vitamins, prenatal doctor and lab fees, ultrasounds, specialist visits if needed, car seats, strollers, bassinets/cribs, clothing, blankets, breast pumps along with the bottles and necessary supplies to accompany those, and the list goes on.

Consider a mother, such as myself, moving through a pregnancy, due date being January 29th, but still needing to prepare up through the end of the year prior. All of the items above are needed well before the baby actually arrives, since there is not way of knowing how soon that could happen. That mother purchases all of those things with the intention of providing for that baby, but they aren't able to claim that baby until the following year. All of those expenses need to wait over a year to have any financial effect.

I was almost that mother. My daughter was due on January 29, 2014. I needed all of those things prior to the new year, because that is a sense of security knowing my baby will be taken care of as soon as she comes.

My daughter, however, came 5 weeks early. 5 weeks early with a NICU stay to follow. Some said I was lucky since I could claim her for the 2013 taxes. How does that make sense? She was only outside of the womb for 7 days. In a matter of 1 week, the ability to claim that child had changed drastically. My tax returns were beneficial to me much earlier than it would have been 7 days later.

My point is, even had she come on 1/1/2014, I would have still been benefitted exponentially from being able to claim her on my 2013 tax return. As things stand, the matter of 1 week made a huge difference for me, but having her early wasn't a foreseeable event.