

March 9, 2015

To: Family & Community Advancement Committee

I am writing to oppose the passage of HB 69, also known as the “heartbeat” bill. As a secular woman in her mid-40’s who recently had an abortion, I firmly believe that this bill should not be passed.

First, the bill does not allow women to make decisions over their own bodies. This is a violation of our rights. If abortions are no longer allowed after a beating heart is detected, usually around 6 weeks, many women will not have a choice, but to continue on with the pregnancy. As you and I know, most women do not even know they are pregnant until around this stage of pregnancy. Meaning, by the time they found out, it is too late. I ended my pregnancy just at 6 weeks. A heartbeat was detected prior to my procedure. I only found out I was pregnant 5 days prior to the day that I terminated my pregnancy. If HB 69 had passed at that time, because of Ohio’s laws in regards to wait periods, it would have been too late. I would have been forced to have a child that I was most likely too old to have and in no way was in any financial position to have. This kind of legislature not only affects me as a professional independent woman and a Mother of two grown children, but it also would have affected my unborn child growing up. This is leaving out any health issues that the child may have had, being born to a woman in her mid-forties. Women should not be forced to follow through on something that makes such an enormous impact on not just one life, but many.

Second, this bill is based on religious beliefs which should not be thrust upon an entire community. Religious beliefs are not something that should be intertwined with the government. Religious beliefs are personal beliefs which do not represent the vast majority of any community. Why should the passage of a bill based on religious beliefs represent everyone when that is not the case? I believe the role of government is to do what is best for all the people. The passage of HB 69 will not be best for all of the people, if any.

As Co-Chair for Secular Coalition of Ohio, a professional woman living in Columbus, and the Mother of two beautiful grown children, I can only hope that this bill will not pass.

Christina McDuffie

Co-Chair Secular Coalition for Ohio

<http://states.secular.org/states/ohio>

(614)205-3729