

## H.B. 69 (Heartbeat Bill) Proponent Testimony of Rachelle Heidlebaugh

Thank you, Mr. Chairman & members of the committee for allowing my written testimony.

I represent hundreds of thousands of women and their families in Ohio who have suffered from the devastating, horrific and tragic effects of abortion!

My personal story starts 18 ago, when I was drugged and raped. I woke up in shock, confused, in a fog, barely able to walk. As a divorced, single mother struggling alone, I had 30 minutes to arrive at work to keep my job. I did not go to a hospital for treatment, I went to work.

A few weeks later, I found myself in a crisis pregnancy. I couldn't begin to comprehend the lifelong impact and potential consequences of the choice I would make next. I called a girlfriend who convinced me that abortion is no different than a pill preventing pregnancy. Terrified of the difficulties of raising another child alone, I was too willing to be convinced, too easily tempted to buy the lie.

Unfortunately, I did not turn toward God and into His loving arms, I turned my back on Him in shame: I had an abortion. I remember thinking how much I loved my beautiful 11-year old daughter, Heather. I would, in fact, DIE for her. Deep inside, I knew that the baby I carried deserved that from me as well, that it wasn't fair for the BABY to DIE. But my fear, anxiety and denial overwhelmed me. So I did the deed quickly, before I had to admit to myself that it was really a baby.

My thinking was twisted because I believed some very big lies. "It's legal, it can't be murder." "It's my CHOICE." "It's no different than birth control." "It's just a blob of tissue." "It won't hurt (physically or emotionally)." "Just do this and it will be over; the problem will go away."

And thus began the post-abortive nightmare. It's not over, and it didn't go away. *The truth is*, the moment a woman knows she is pregnant, she also knows in her heart that there is LIFE inside of her, a BABY. Had I gone to a Crisis Pregnancy Center, taken time to breathe, to work through the shock and trauma, heard supportive encouraging voices, I believe there would have been a different outcome. I would have avoided the last 18 years of my painful 'Hell' that has bled onto my daughter and family. Instead of delivering a beautiful BABY, I chose to kill mine. I have not paid a legal price, but the cost has been great.

I urge you to pass the Heartbeat Bill (H.B. 69). My abortion trauma far exceeds the bad memories from the rape experience. Had I kept my BABY, I have **no doubt** the natural, beautiful joy of a mother's love for her baby, would have helped me to heal from the rape; instead, I'll never completely heal from my murder.

Little girls do NOT grow up hoping to have an abortion. We grow up playing with dolls and wanting to be mommies! Abortion is not a normal daily thought, until a woman is thrown into an unplanned "Crisis Pregnancy". Do any of us make the wisest decisions in the middle of a crisis? Typically, the worst decisions are made under pressure.

Millions of post abortive women have their own horrific stories and experiences of what a past abortion has done to their lives, **if she can even talk about it**. Typically women don't talk about it, but remain in our silent prisons of shame, guilt, isolation and self-condemnation. Despite the fact that many women feel forced by boyfriends or parents, we know that we laid on the table and we let it happen. I cannot express in words the devastation this has created in my life. **Until healing in Christ Jesus, sadly women remain in this prison.**

**Please pass the Heartbeat Bill to end the suffering** caused by abortion; stop the murder of innocent babies. Close the abortion mills. Take the voices away from the power lobbies and profit motives. Listen to our babies' innocent cries for Life.

Please let history show that on your watch, Ohio stood up and did what was "Right", what was "Good" and chose LIFE over death!!!..... PLEASE.

**Rachelle Heidlebaugh**, March 15, 2015