

**Community and Family Advancement Committee
House Bill 135
May 19, 2015**

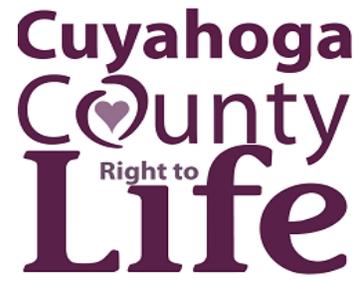
Chairman Derickson, Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking Member Howse and the members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on House Bill 135. My name is Rachel Mullen and I am the Executive Director of Cuyahoga Right to Life. But first and foremost I am a mother and my personal story is very relative to this bill.

While there has been monumental advancements made in medicine, errors still occur. During one of my pregnancies, I received a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome due to a false positive test result. I was informed that the child I was carrying had Down syndrome. From that moment on the pressure to abort my child was tremendous.

The Obstetrician told me that an abortion was in the best interest of the child. I countered that my love for my child is unconditional and was not dependent on the child's health. I was lectured by this doctor for seemingly an hour but was probably about ten minutes as to why this child didn't deserve to be born. Among her points was that I should terminate the pregnancy quickly before more people realized I was even pregnant. Then I could "try again" for another child.

There will never be an issue, medical or otherwise, that will interfere with my love for my children and I held strong against the strong-armed tactics of this doctor who clearly didn't see value in the lives of atypical children. The doctor wanted the blood test to be performed again as she felt somehow it would change my mind. I relented to a second test in part to quickly get out of an uncomfortable situation without any added fight from my alleged caregiver. I saw no harm in a simple blood test being repeated, so I agreed.

The second test showed that the first test was nothing more than an error. Even with medical advancements, misdiagnoses happen. And I have firsthand experience that there is often a rush to judgment and a tremendous amount of pressure put upon pregnant women based upon these tests. In these instances, medical errors can cause even typical children their lives.



Not only do children with Down syndrome have value, those children who are misdiagnosed have value as well.

Thank you for your consideration.