



**State Representative Bill Patmon
Sponsor Testimony
HB 294
January 26, 2016**

Hello Chairman Coley, Vice Chairman Seitz, Ranking Member Yuko and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 294.

I want to begin by giving you each a question to ponder and that is---is a tadpole a frog? Who among us can say when a soul or spirit is sparked into a human being? To quote Dr. Robert George, a Professor of jurisprudence at Princeton University, "...when a sperm joins ovum, these two individual cells cease to be, and their union generates a new and distinct organism. This organism is a whole, though in the beginning developmentally immature, member of the human species." At the end of our lives, we have choices about our care, and we have certain rights. Why are these rights denied to those who are at the earliest stages of their lives?

If that does not give you pause, consider the racial disparities of abortions. According to the 2014 US Census data, African Americans make up 12.6% of Ohio's population, yet had 39% of the reported abortions in Ohio and make up 52.7% of the death sentenced defendants. The infant mortality rate for Ohio is 6.8 overall, 5.3 for white babies, and 14.3 for African American babies. We are consistently failing our families, babies, and future generations. Groups are getting funding for programs like infant mortality reduction, child and family health, and we still have these rates. Someone is not doing their job.

Despite your personal feelings on life, I think we can all agree that when you sign a contract to receive money from the state or federal government that money should be used for the purpose it was earmarked. If you receive money for HIV/AIDS programs-- it should go to HIV/AIDS programs. The same is true for maternal and child health monies.

Again, thank you Chairman Coley and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee.