

# Choosing Hope Adoptions

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A Christian Non-Profit Adoption Agency

Re: Testimony Ohio SB 164

August 21, 2017

Chairman Burke, Vice Chairman Beagle, Ranking Member Tavares, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today in favor of Senate Bill 164. My name is Angela Boblitt and I am the Founder and Director of Choosing Hope Adoptions, a non profit adoption agency serving all of Ohio, as well as the Parent of Lucy, our 3 year old daughter who has Down syndrome. I am here today to speak in support of this legislation.

On Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 We received a call that would forever change and add an incredible amount of richness to our family's life. An Ohio Adoption agency called saying there was a 6-week-old baby girl, with Down syndrome, who needed a family. The agency representative said, "Are you interested."

7 days later we were home with a tiny beautiful baby girl we named Lucy Jane Megan. Lucy is the most incredible blessing. She brings joy and offers hugs to everyone she meets. Her favorite food is cheese, she loves to facetime her grandparents, snuggle with our dog, and ride the bus to pre-school....much like every other pre-schooler. She has taught us grace, humility, patience, and love...she has taught our other 3 children, ages 10, 7, and 5 to love unconditionally. Our family is richer because of Lucy.

Lucy is fortunate in that her Down syndrome diagnoses didn't come until after she was born. It is very possible that had her diagnoses come prenatally her life would have been ended. I cannot properly put into words the reality of a loss this would be.



I strongly believe that Adoption is a positive alternative to abortion. That the option to abort a child because of a prenatal diagnoses is a heinous form of discrimination and snuffs out the beautiful faces of children like Lucy. Her life is incredibly valuable...I would say more valuable than my own.

On August 1<sup>st</sup> 2014, Choosing Hope Adoptions, was officially licensed and opened in Springfield, OH. We speak with and counsel women and men facing an untimely pregnancy every day. On several occasions, these expecting parents have had a prenatal diagnoses of Down syndrome. These children have names and faces. Let me share with you some of their names.

Last September baby Leo officially became the son of Nora and David, and the brother of his other 6 siblings, one of which also has Down syndrome, through adoption.

Later than same month a brave and courageous birthmom placed her beautiful Hannah into the arms of fist time parents Jessica and Allen.

In October, a young women brought baby Justin into the world and chose Dick and Deborah to raise her son. Justin is thriving alongside his other 4 siblings, two of which also have Down syndrome.

For every expecting parent, we have counseled and has chosen to make an adoption plan there are others who have parented...and there are twice as many that have ended their child's life.

These children, whose lives hang in limbo in the womb of their mother have names and faces.

They are Lucy, Leo, Hannah, and Justin.

Our agency has families waiting and ready to say "yes" to a child with Down syndrome. The National Down Syndrome Adoptions Network, located in Cincinnati, has 50 families waiting specifically for a child with Down syndrome.

Lucy, Leo, Hannah, Justin, and all of the names and faces of Down syndrome have value. Their quality of life is rich. To extinguish their lives, in an act of medical discrimination, is an unthinkable tragedy.

Look at me daughter's beautiful face, look her in her eyes, ask her for a high five or fist bump and you will know in a heartbeat that the value of her life is not less than yours or mine.