



Allie Frazier

Executive Director of Right to Life of Northeast Ohio

Proponent Testimony on House Bill 598

House Government Oversight Committee

Thursday, May 19th, 2022

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on behalf of House Bill 598, the Human Life Protection Act. My name is Allie Frazier, and I am the Executive Director of Right to Life of Northeast Ohio. Right to Life of Northeast Ohio is a pro-life organization which seeks to protect innocent human life from conception to natural death, through human rights advocacy and community action on issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide.

The Human Life Protection Act would ban all abortions in Ohio, except those deemed necessary to save the mother's life, but would not take effect until the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. As everyone in this chamber I'm sure is aware, *Roe v. Wade* will most likely be overturned by the United State Supreme Court in a matter of weeks. At this historic moment, it is important for Ohio to be prepared for what's next, but it's also important for us to have honest conversations about abortion not only from the perspective of the rights of the preborn, but also the rights of women.

When discussing legalized abortion and where it has led us to as a society, one of the first stories that comes to mind is that of D.C. Assistant Police Chief Chanel Dickerson, who as a cadet was told by the department, "have an abortion or be fired." Years later, when Dickerson finally shared her story of pain and discrimination, another woman in the department came forward. Karen Arikpo too had been told to kill her child through abortion or lose her job. Later, when she tried to

have another child, she was unable. A Fox 5 article quotes her as saying, "I did this for a job...And then to want kids and can't have them. How do you tell people that?" This is the toxic, anti-woman environment that legalized abortion creates.

In the debate surrounding abortion, it is imperative that we are clear about how legalized abortion has affected women and served as a tool of patriarchal systems, rather than a liberating force. The belief that human life is disposable is what opened the door for these women to be victimized. When we dehumanize preborn children, we dehumanize their mothers as well.

This is the pervasive nature of dehumanization; it is never static. It always creates new victims. When our society convinces women that their children are disposable, and less important than the pressures society has placed on them, we, as women, allow ourselves to be dehumanized. That's why legislation like the H.B. 598 is so important. Ohio must draw a hard line about abortion: it kills children and creates a society that is actively antagonistic to women and our biology.

Let's be abundantly clear: our bodies are not defective, and pregnancy is not a disease. Likewise, women in our modern era have more agency than any women before us in choosing when to start our families and how to live our lives. We shouldn't be told by the state that we need the ability to kill our children to be truly liberated. To quote New Wave Feminists, "When liberation costs innocent lives, it's merely oppression redistributed." Our empowerment doesn't require the violence of abortion. If anything, it is hampered by it.

Make no mistake, abortion is violence. When talking about abortion, we are compelled to be clear and absolutely honest about what it is and what it entails. Women who have abortions face an 81% increased risk of mental health challenges. They are also 155% more likely to commit suicide. Additionally, these numbers don't even begin to address the myriad of physical repercussions women suffer from post-abortion. In northeast Ohio where our organization is based, women have experienced frightening complications such as cervical laceration and hemorrhage after abortions. In 2014, a woman died in northeast Ohio after suffering fatal blood loss from a legal abortion. She left behind a two-year-old son. It seems strange that something marketed to women as "empowering" would have such brutal and devastating effects on us.

Additionally, abortion is deeply brutal for the preborn child. Depending on the gestational age of the preborn child, abortion either starves, dismembers, or poisons the child. In a chemical

abortion, the tiny growing child is cut off from nutrients and dies by suffocation and/or starvation. In a surgical abortion, the child's body is ripped apart, either by suction or by being torn limb from limb. In a late term induction-abortion, the child is injected with either digoxin or potassium chloride, with the latter being the same drug used to execute inmates on death row. Those inmates, however, are given anesthesia, due to the excruciating nature of the process. Preborn babies undergoing late-term induction abortions are given no such relief. They suffer a chemically induced heart-attack in utero and their mothers then give birth to a dead child. This is the violence that legalized abortion perpetuates. Women wounded, and babies brutalized. Is this the "choice" that our state should support?

The unapologetic embrace of women, our bodies, and our earth-shaking ability to grow and protect another human soul is not negotiable. As women, we must refuse to conform to the notion that we are most free when we can become like a man: childless. The very concept is rooted in the deeply insidious idea that in being more masculine, women become more free. This ideology constitutes misogyny of the highest order. If society refuses to conform to our unique capabilities as women, then it is society, and not us, who must change. It is an egregious error our state has allowed women's capacity to foster life to be treated as some sort of correctable disadvantage. We have allowed the abortion movement to high-jack the strength and resilience of women to push the lie that we need to kill our children in order to be free.

In the fight for women's rights, we must refuse to allow the abortion industry to use our children as hostages. This is not the dark ages. We do not need to use violence as a solution to poverty, or abuse, or pain. We work to eliminate the suffering, not the sufferer. When we say that women need abortion, we are pitting mother against child and advocating for a violent solution to the real challenges that we as women face. This is kind of culture that legalized abortion creates. And this is why Ohio must end abortion.

I will close with this quote from Susan B. Anthony, "Sweeter even than to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been to me to help bring about a better state of things for mothers generally, so that their unborn little ones could not be willed away from them." Ohio, if we are ever to create a more just, free, and inclusive society, we must end abortion. The pro-life movement is ready with open arms to support and empower women with our network of pregnancy centers, community resources, and our ever-expanding social safety nets. When we said "Love Them Both" that wasn't just a slogan, it was a promise. We are committed to doing

everything in our power to further liberate women and protect the lives of their children. We are ready for what comes next. It's time to end abortion, Ohio.

I urge you to vote yes on House Bill 598, the Human Life Protection Act. Thank you and I'm happy to answer any questions.