

Senate Bill 157 Testimony:

Members of the Committee, Chairwoman Roegner, thank you for allowing me to speak today regarding Senate Bill 157, the Born Alive Infant Protection Act.

My name is Alli Lowe, and I am a current student at Miami University, and I am the outgoing President of Students for Life at my school. I want to start off by saying that I am not here today as a pro-life activist because the question before us is not one about where life begins, heartbeats, conception, any of those things. Today, we are here to ask one question: what makes a life worthy. A question we have grappled with throughout human history and especially in the last year.

So I want to briefly ask, for those of you who may be hesitant about this bill, I implore you to put aside your preconceived notions of pro-life and pro-choice, wherever you may stand. Because again, today we aren't facing a pro-life versus pro-choice question.

The most common objection I hear concerning this legislation is that botched abortions never happen. I ask you to look up the names of Melissa Ohden, Gianna Jessen, or Hope Hoffman. A small amount of research reveals that these do happen.

In 2006 at a Florida abortion clinic, Sycloria Williams gave birth to a 23-week-old baby. The co-owner of the clinic proceeded to look at this breathing baby, cut the umbilical cord and zip it into a biohazard bag and throw her "remains" in the trash. The decomposing remains were found a week later in a cardboard box by police. This isn't abortion, this is murder. Acting as otherwise, is not only misguided, but it is a blatant disillusion and denial of reality.

Williams' story is not an isolated incident. Figures vary in their estimates of how many failed abortions occur each year, but regardless of how small or how large the number may be, this question still matters. Because a life is a life, and the unnecessary loss of one is a crippling injustice.

For those hesitant, I have to ask: would you pass legislation to save one life from police brutality? If so, there should be no hesitancy in voting in favor of this legislation today just because a small number of people are at stake.

I think we can all agree that a living, breathing human's worth is not determined by their "wantedness". Just because some may harbor hatred or disdain in their hearts toward others, does not mean that this human lacks value. This line of thinking is at the root of some of humanities darkest tragedies, such as genocide and slavery.

Once a child has exited the womb, we can no longer call them “things” or “clumps of cells”. And to treat them as such, to throw breathing babies into biohazard bags or leave them unattended for hours, watching them draw their last breath--is a crime against humanity. And it should be treated as nothing less.

If a woman were to give birth at the hospital and, while driving home, be killed alongside her baby in a fatal car accident, the perpetrator would be charged with double homicide. Yet, we somehow let other babies, of the exact same age, die in abortion clinics unattended with no remorse on behalf of physicians. So, at what point exactly does a life become worthy of living? A day after a birth? A week? It is certainly unclear without this legislation.

So where is the line here? Can a mother change her mind a day, a week after giving birth and leave her baby unattended to die? I hope you can see where this line of thinking can potentially lead us as a society. Although it may be a dramatic example, it is in fact a valid and practical question to be asking considering the opposition to this bill.

In this country, we have taken a hard look the past year at the value of humanity and personhood--of what makes a person “worthy” of life. This discussion should not exclude living babies, who have survived a failed abortion. I ask everyone today to take a hard and unbiased look at this legislation. Take this bill at utter face value, shedding your preconceived ideas of how you should vote. I believe that, if you did this, you would recognize this a commonsense bill, simply stating that our society should not silently allow and promote infanticide. I hope you will agree.

Thank you all for your time today, I am happy to answer any questions.