



## House Bill 149 Sponsor Testimony

Representative Margaret Conditt, Ph.D.

House Health Committee

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Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Health Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today of behalf of House Bill 149, which we call the Abortion Trafficking Prevention Act.

By way of background, over this past Christmas holiday, I read that the State of Michigan had passed a law against selling aborted baby parts. So I researched our Ohio laws and found that the ORC already has a law against Abortion Trafficking on the books, and it was passed back in 1974. The current law (ORC 2919.14) states *"No person shall experiment upon or sell the product of human conception which is aborted. Experiment does not include autopsies..."*

However, the penalty for trafficking in aborted parts is only a first degree misdemeanor (M-1), yet if someone were to unlawfully sell a donated kidney, for example, that would be a third degree felony (F-3). HB 149 proposes to make those penalties the same, and recognize that the unlawful sale of unborn baby parts is equal to the unlawful sale of other human parts.

House Bill 149 would also clarify that the Abortion Trafficking could not be concealed as compensation or reimbursement for the *"processing, preservation, quality control, storage or transportation"* of the product of human conception which has been aborted.

Having spoken with the representatives of the organ-donation field, there is nothing in this bill would be a problem with legitimate organ donations. Even the donation of fetal remains from a miscarriage or a stillborn birth is unaffected by this bill language, since abortion is defined in the ORC as "the purposeful termination of human pregnancy", and miscarriages and stillborn births are definitely not purposeful. Finally, the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association was asked for their opinion about this change in the criminal penalty from M-1 to F-3, and I expect we will be hearing a positive response at future hearings.

Chairman Huffman, I thank you again for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on behalf of House Bill 149. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.