

Ohio Senate
Committee on Health, Human Services and Medicaid
Senate Bill 164, 3rd hearing
Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Testimony of David Perry

I am the father of a boy with Down syndrome and am opposed to SB 164.

This bill will not lower rates of abortion following a pre-natal diagnosis nor will it help people with Down syndrome.

The best way to prevent abortions after a prenatal diagnosis is to make the words "Down syndrome" less scary. This bill will make it harder, even criminal, to talk about Down syndrome and abortion.

The Down syndrome community broadly supports non-partisan pro-information legislation. We want parents who get a diagnosis to get the best possible information. Criminalizing abortion based on a prenatal diagnosis will just make it harder to talk about these issues.

Every day people with Down syndrome are exceeding the boundaries of what we thought possible in education, jobs, personal lives, and contributions to the community. All efforts should be focused on telling these stories and bringing these opportunities to more people.

We know that many women terminate pregnancies after a prenatal diagnosis because they believe they cannot afford to raise a child with Down syndrome. The best way to change that is to better fund special education, healthcare, respite care, and all the other support services that our community needs.

In 2015, I wrote the following article in response to an earlier version of this legislation, HB 131:

Don't politicize my son over Down syndrome
<http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/24/opinions/perry-abortion-down-syndrome-ohio/>