Testimony of Diane Cartolano

Heartbeat Bill: HB 258

December 4, 2018

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Thank you for hearing my testimony today. I am here to voice my support for HB 258 because I have a personal understanding of the destructive effects of abortion.

There are few things more painful to contemplate than the death of a child, except, perhaps, being complicit in their death, which is exactly what I did in 1990 and 1992 when I paid to end the lives of my unborn children through abortion.

I convinced myself of all the lies: that “it” was just a “mass of tissue”, devoid of the ability to feel pain. It was my “right”. It was perfectly “legal” so what could be wrong with it? It would be over before I knew it and I could get on with my life.

Nothing could have been further from the truth.

I will never forget the horrific things I heard and saw, as these precious and innocent humans, my children, were dismembered and then suctioned out of what should have been the safest place in the world for them – my womb – into a cold glass jar on a table to my right. Nor will I forget the feelings of torment and unbearable regret when I realized the finality of my choices.

For years, I tried to suppress the truth of what I had done, but whether it happens on purpose or by accident, it’s impossible to escape the impact of causing the death of another person.

Over time, I exhibited many symptoms common in post-abortive women such as: repressed (and unrepressed) anger, perfectionism; overwhelming shame and guilt; difficulty sleeping; depression; suicidal thoughts; financial difficulties; alcohol abuse; promiscuity; emotional indifference; debilitating insecurity and more. My abortions also robbed me of experiencing the fullness of joy related to the birth of my daughters, after I was married several years later.

Euphemisms, no matter how clever or how often they are repeated, will never change the truth about something. And the truth is this: abortion is an act of violence that unjustly ends the life of innocent human being and wounds a woman for life.

So, what makes humans valuable? Is it because of what we can do, achieve or contribute to society? No. “The pro-life position is tolerant and inclusive” states Scott Klusendorf of the Life Training Institute. We believe all unborn lives have value, whether they are future “Einsteins” or future participants in the Special Olympics. He further states that, “If we are going to confuse one’s value with one’s function, what’s to stop us from applying that same thinking to those outside the womb?”

Only 4 things distinguish the unborn from those already born. Think of the acronym SLED: Size, Level of Development, Environment (or location) and Degree of Dependency. None of these criteria are acceptable to justify killing an innocent person who is already born, so why are they acceptable for killing an innocent unborn person?

Professor Micheline Matthews-Roth of Harvard University Medical School states: “It is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception.” And Professor Hymie Gordon of the Mayo Clinic states: “By all the criteria of modern molecular biology, life is present from the moment of conception.”

We didn’t come from embryos. We once were embryos. From conception on, we were becoming more mature, not more human. A 6-inch journey down the birth canal does not magically turn us into human beings.

We display both arrogance and ignorance by basing a person’s humanity and worth on arbitrary standards such as being: unwanted, unplanned, inconvenient, imperfect, unaffordable, or even being conceived through such heinous acts as rape or incest. The acts are heinous, not the child. The circumstances of one’s conception have no bearing on the value of one’s life.

In fact, victims of sexual assault often feel they have no choice but to abort, even if they want to keep the child. Many also report feeling further victimized after an abortion. Hardship never justifies violence and the tragic violence of rape doesn’t justify the subsequent violence of abortion. We should be punishing the perpetrator, not the victim and the innocent bystander. Incidentally, there is no such thing as a “kinder/gentler” abortion method that could be used to abort children conceived through sexual assault, or any children, for that matter.

Abortion doesn’t empower women. It devalues, demeans and marginalizes them and their unborn children.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 258.