

Senate Bill 260 Proponent Testimony
House Health, Committee
Barry Sheets, Legislative Consultant, Right to Life Action Coalition of Ohio
December 8th, 2020

Chairman Lipps, vice Chairman Holmes , Ranking Member Boyd and members of the committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 260, which would help ensure greater patient safety by requiring that the initial steps in chemical abortion procedures be provided in person by an attending physician.

I am Barry Sheets, legislative consultant for the Right to Life Action Coalition of Ohio. Our collaborative includes many life-affirming member organizations, including Cleveland Right to Life, Dayton Right to Life, Greater Toledo Right to Life, Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati and other regional groups. We support Senator Huffman's efforts to help protect women's health.

Our coalition does not support abortion as so-called "health care", but do support policy efforts to ensure that if abortions are going to be performed in Ohio, then every precaution is taken to prevent injury or harm to at least the pregnant woman. The rapid rise of "telemedicine" has created an environment where some providers will seek to "phone in" (or videoconference in) their oversight of a patient undergoing a chemical abortion procedure.

We believe that this is a dangerous precedent and can lead to potential significant harms for the women involved. The drugs involved are dangerous, and are given for the purpose of terminating a growing life inside of the pregnant woman. Should an adverse reaction occur, having a licensed physician only available via an electronic device can delay or prevent necessary immediate care from being provided.

Senator Huffman should be applauded for being willing to help his own profession keep the standards of care in these situations as high as possible. We would urge the committee to report this bill favorably at your earliest opportunity, so that these protections for women's health can be put into place without delay.

Thank you for your kind attention to my comments. I would be happy to take any questions the committee may have.