

Laura Van Doren
Senate Bill 23 – Six-Week Abortion Ban
Opponent Testimony
Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee
February 26, 2019

Chairman Burke, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the Ohio Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Laura Van Doren from Hilliard Ohio. I am a lifelong citizen of Ohio a voting constituent, full time mother and I full time employee. I am strongly opposed to Senate Bill 23, otherwise known as the “Heartbeat Bill”, so strongly in fact that I took the day off work to be here. Abortion needs to remain legal and safe for numerous reasons.

My top two are reasons are my 2 beautiful daughters. Let us be clear. This bill will not stop abortions from happening. Abortions happed before Roe v. Wade guaranteed access to legal and safe abortions. Abortions will continue if this bill is passed. What this bill does do is to remove the possibility of a legal safe abortion before many women know they are pregnant. With only 7 providers in Ohio, per the Guttmacher Institute, many women seeking services often must wait weeks for an appointment. This wait alone ensures that practically no women seeking an abortion will meet the 6-week criteria. It effectively outlaw’s abortion in Ohio, I do not want to be placed in a position in which either of my daughters or any of their friends or any daughter of Ohio is put into a position in which an unsafe abortion happens. I do not wish to visit a hospital or a funeral parlor because of this bill.

I want my daughters and myself to have access to the best OBGYN and medical care available. I want this for every man, woman and child in Ohio. This bill would tie the hands of our medical professionals to help the women of our state make the best decisions about their care, even outrageously in the cases of the incest or rape. This bill directly interferes with the ability of a medical professional to treat his or her patient as he or she believes is best as they may face legal consequences if they do so. Medical professionals are trained to treat patients. Lawmakers are not. I would not come to a lawmaker for a mammogram and I certainly would not come to one to treat a pregnancy. The end result of this bill would discourage medical practitioners from wanting to practice in Ohio.

I want my daughters to stay in Ohio. This law is not inviting or conducive to get women to come to or stay in Ohio. My youngest daughter is a freshman in High School. She is already taking an AP class, for college credit, and is looking at colleges already. She wants to be a microbiologist and is very analytical. She makes lists of everything. If this bill passes, on her list of stay or go, it will go in the negative column. If this is true for her, I am sure it will be true for other bright young women. Banning abortion is not popular and not something that Ohio should be known for.

This is a bill which will cost Ohio money. This will affect every Ohioan. Ohio will bleed tax money to defend this bill in court. Make no mistake, it will be challenged up to the Supreme Court. It is an irresponsible use of our tax money. Money which could be put too much better use. Another financial aspect to consider is malpractice premium for our doctors. Theoretically, this bill would lead to an increase in pregnancies carried to term. This would lead

to an increase “High-risk” pregnancies. High-risk typically means higher malpractice premiums. This increase would be passed to every woman and girl in Ohio seeking care.

I think everyone in this room, pro-choice, pro-life or anyone in between, can agree that reducing the need for abortions is the end goal. Senate Bill 23 is not the way to do it. Increasing a comprehensive fact based sexual education curriculum in our schools, ensuring that everyone in Ohio has access to affordable effective birth control, working in our communities and opening the lines of communication are. I urge you to vote not on Senate Bill 23, the dangerous six-week abortion ban.

Thank you for your time. I will now take any questions you might have.

Sincerely,
Laura Van Doren