

Dear Legislatures and Fellow Vermonters,

I am one of the lucky ones. My life was valued and cared for since conception.

I find it extremely ironic that the majority of women and men upon discovering a pregnancy are thrilled with the news of a new LIFE joining their family. But yet there are those among us who refuse to consider a conceived life, LIFE. We don't go around talking to each other about our hopes for the fetus growing within us to one day be a living human being. We already inherently know it is life and talk about it as such, "I am going to have a baby!" How can we dare to presume at what minute, hour, day, week or month we truly are life? Women do not grow something lifeless until birth...conception IS the moment of the creation of life! And what a truly amazing thing that is!

A woman's body was created to create and nurture LIFE. That is how each and every one of us are here today. We were once upon a time the tiny LIFE that grew within our mothers' wombs. In no other way can we have possibly come into existence.

There is no "right" time for having a baby for any of us. Life is never smooth sailing and will never be perfectly filled with only good things. We all endure hardships and challenges. I am not trying to minimize the extreme hardships of many, especially those women who find themselves pregnant under very grim circumstances. There is hope! There is life! Let us support these women in a truly compassionate way that allows life and not death to remedy a very tough situation.

Where will we ultimately draw the line if we do not call a fetus life until the moment it is born? We do not know or can foresee the repercussions of our actions for the future with this severe dismissal of the rights of unborn life. I am afraid for the future of Vermont and am in shock and disbelief how callous we have become over the innocent lives that cannot speak for themselves. Women need to be supported in a way that helps them to realize that their womanhood and amazing ability to grow and nurture life within themselves deserves our utmost respect and undying support. It is not something to be ashamed of or burdened by but to be celebrated and supported!

Please do not allow bill H.57 to pass. We are talking about the LIFE of an unborn child. An inconvenience or hardship to a woman should never justify a death of innocent life. Let's find more compassionate and life supportive ways to help women who truly feel they cannot endure an unwanted pregnancy.

Catherine Walker