

Hello! My name is (Robert) Kerey Hamilton. I appreciate that our state constitution encourages the public to be involved with their state officers and I wanted to take the time to engage with some current local issues, particularly the bill H-57 now being considered by the House Committee on Human Services. I'm a bit new to this, so I hope that I'm contacting a suitable person for this particular issue: if not could you please help me connect with a more suitable point of contact?

After looking at the current draft of the bill in question I'm particularly concerned about the line "A fertilized Egg, Embryo, or fetus shall not have independent rights under Vermont law." I would suggest to the House Committee on Human Services to revise this line to something less extreme in their next draft of the bill, considering that allowing a fetus to be killed during any point during a pregnancy, even up until the very last stages, stands on very unstable ethical and logical grounds: it is well documented that a child does not begin to contain human faculties at the single monumental moment of birth, but rather these faculties exist on a spectrum which is already well developed at that point. Thus from an ethical standpoint, logically speaking, there would be little difference from "terminating" a pregnancy in it's last stages and infanticide.

While the rights of women should certainly be held in the highest regard I feel that it is important to establish the matter of individuality in a logical manner, being careful not to be confused by rhetoric. Is it really reasonable for the factor of a child being nourished in the environment of the womb, rather than an exterior environment to be the deciding line between individuality and non-individuality? As a fetus contains all of the necessary definitions of life, only lacking maturity, and since all children are immature forms of the species, who is to say that a child should have any rights at all under 1 years old, 7 years old, or any other arbitrary age? Considering a child's right to live to spontaneously materialize at birth doesn't seem to correspond with reality. Furthermore, the recognition by Vermont that a Fetus is a legal person would be in accordance with The (federal) "Unborn Victims of Violence Act" of 2004, and would provide a stronger legal standpoint for increased penalties for assaults against pregnant women. It is my hope that the committee will consider these points as they try to make a decision that is compassionate towards all people.

Thank you for all of your hard work for the public!

- R. Kerey Hamilton, resident of Lincoln, Vermont (registered voter)