

Dear HR.57 Committee,

Thank you for reading my email. This is my first email / letter I've ever written to any legislator on any subject. I have had my opinions on the sensitive subject of abortion and a woman's rights for many years, but in light of the historic and catastrophic nature of H.57, I simply cannot sit by and say nothing. I do request that you read this with an open heart and an open mind.

It's 3:59 am. I sit at my keyboard, wondering what I might say to my representatives that might influence them to vote no on HR.57. The debate over abortion and women's rights has been raging for decades; what can I say that will be new? Answer: nothing. All has been said, right? I am simply desiring, then, to simply add my voice to the many. Who knows? Maybe somehow one thought or phrase might reach one heart and be of some good. I will only list five thoughts, though of course there is so much more:

1. HR.57 goes too far. Allowing the abortion of a baby right up to birth opens the door for future legislators to possibly vote to allow the harvesting of children's body parts. I cannot believe I just typed that sentence. This is an appalling thought. Pause reading this and ponder the actual procedure: a person extracts the pieces of a baby from inside it's mother and, on a tray, reassembles the individual parts of the child to make sure none are missing. Then the parts are sold. The idea that we would destroy and sell or children's parts is simply unconscionable. What other adjectives can I use that might wake and shock you as you read this? Gruesome? Ghastly? Shameful? Sinister?

2. HR.57 goes too far. Why should a child only be allowed any rights if he or she is breathing air as a gas in it's lungs? What I mean is, a child in the womb 'breathes' oxygen. His or her lungs are filled with amniotic fluid, so it isn't inhaling oxygen into his or her lungs. How does the baby get his or her needed oxygen? The blood, being circulated through it's little body by a beating heart, needs oxygen to live. They get their oxygen by the supply coming from their mom via their umbilical cord. For a child to be denied rights as a human simply because he or she is still in it's mother and not yet breathing air outside the womb doesn't make any sense. How can you reconcile this contradiction? Allowing abortion up to the mom's labor/delivery, and denying the baby has any rights until after the baby has been delivered....how does this make any sense? While the baby is being born, say, in the birth canal, it still would have no rights under HR.57. Please I beg you ask yourself this question: Could HR.57 be morally wrong? I'm asking you to examine your own heart....your own morals. When does a child get his or her human rights? Could the baby's rights as Vermont citizens begin some time before delivery and their first breath of oxygen? How long before? Five minutes before? Or five minutes before that? Or one hour before that? How can we play with a human life based on this kind of fuzzy, arbitrary thinking? It's not alive until it's breathing air? Can you really, in good conscience, accept this? I just can't wrap my head around that illogic.

Of course - of course! - it's a living person - a Vermonter! - deserving of human rights whether they have been born or not.

3. I'm sure by now you have seen the contrast of the happy couple who has struggled to conceive and who learns they are finally pregnant with the couple who decide they don't want to remain pregnant. I can't get over the fact that, regardless of the desires of the parents, in both cases, there is a human child inside of a mom. That is, we're not talking about a cyst or a tumor or some other piece of tissue. Does the 'finally pregnant' couple celebrate because they have a mere piece of tissue growing inside? Of course not. They celebrate because they look ahead to the pregnancy, the baby's development....measuring the mom's tummy, singing to the baby (I used a 'pregophone,' a funnel on either end of a plastic tube to talk to and sing to my three babies :-)) in anticipation of the birth of the baby whom they have grown to love. They've even seen pictures prior to birth via ultrasound! Fantastic! Amazing technology! We can see our babies' faces! See their little hands and feet and tiny beating hearts! Astounding! Wonderful! The wonder of it is a deep mystery - human life! Imagine if we found even the most simple of living organisms alive on Mars...we as a people all over the planet would gasp and stand in awe at the very thought of it: life on Mars! Do you see the contradiction? We have, right here in front of us, living organisms - humans - growing inside of moms. How do we not call that Life? How do we not protect it?

And by the way, that very same happy couple, if their baby miscarries, is devastated. They mourn the loss of - what? A mere piece of tissue? When you have a cyst removed, do you mourn it's loss? No, but we mourn the loss of our children when they die...even the ones in the womb...assuming they are 'wanted'. This is a strange contradiction. If wanted, we mourn when they die. If unwanted, we just remove them and move on. And I do indeed know women who have had abortions and have mourned the loss and regretted their decision. No one talks about the regret and natural guilt the moms feel when they look the issue square -on. They've taken the life of their child.

4. I fully recognize that the opposing side lists women's rights as the main issue. You know, I have to say, as a pro-life person, (and a guy, by the way) that I actually do agree that the rights of women in this country have been trampled for generations. I'm inspired by the suffragettes of prior generations, for instance. OF COURSE women should have the right to vote. And I fully support equal pay for equal work - it's crazy that in this day and age many women aren't compensated the same as men for the same job. But I simply cannot link arms with them over abortion for one very simple reason: there are more people than just the woman at stake when she claims, "my body, my choice." That is, there is a living person inside of a pregnant woman. There are two lives at stake, not just the life of the mom. Who will speak up for the rights of these little ones? Shouldn't they also be allowed to say, "MY body, MY choice" to have life?

5. Doubtless you have seen the amazing movie, Schindler's List. It describes how a Nazi war profiteer had a change of heart and chose to protect and save a number of Jews that he formerly used as slaves. We are amazed and inspired by the man's change of heart. And didn't you, like me, cry at the very end of the film when you saw the b&w film change to color and the real life Schindler Jews come walking across that field? In the movie, Ben Kingsley's character, upon looking at the List of people Schindler would save, states, "*the list is an absolute good.*" Oh, how I wish we, as Vermonters, might have an epiphany and wake up from the stupor we've been in and defeat HR.57 (and for that matter disallow abortion for any reason) so a future generation of Vermonters might one day be allowed the chance at life....be allowed the chance to walk across that Vermont field because some courageous earlier generation - us! - chose to do the "*absolute good.*"

Thanks for your attention and for reading this with an open heart and open mind.

Sincerely,
Chris Booth
Rutland, VT