

The following is my written testimony for the H.57 hearing:

My grief and sorrow at this proposal is overwhelming. In championing this bill, its supporters are championing ending a life. The legacy you are choosing in this bill is one that's purpose is to kill babies that, had their mothers gone to early labor, would not be candidates for this bill's actions.

If you type in 'full term pregnancy' into Pinterest you receive a long list of baby's developments, what to look for in early labor, huge belly pictures, what fruit size compares to your baby's size, what your body is doing to prepare for birth and a newborn and tips for time at the hospital. Week 12 is the 'safe week', week 24 is the 'viability week', and week 37 is considered full term. As in a baby born prematurely has the potential to live from week 24 onwards out of the womb. Visit any NICU and see those working hard to take care of delicate lives, talk with those parents who are doing anything they can to help their children. Those are all children who are living, whose life could've been electively ended. And more so, if we can chose to end a viable life with this bill, what will be its trajectory or ending other viable lives in the future?

In my personal story motherhood has been a long fought for, tumultuous, grieved and rejoiced over journey. We fought hard to obtain the goal of pregnancy and the twice we succeeded ended in the grief of miscarriage. After years in the adoption process a brave and humble woman chose to give me the gift of motherhood, chose to give our daughter the life she lives with a full to the brim exuberance of wonder, passion and delight. I love her so deeply my heart could burst. And I love her birth mother for courage and amazing daughter who has touched the lives of so many and spreads joy wherever she goes.

To the women who see ending their child's life as the only option- your child is dearly loved! There are so many praying and yearning to grow their family, not by the fruit of their womb, but the fruit of their hearts. They, as do I, pray for you- your life and future. You are dearly loved by God, the Father who gives all life, who sees you and catches every tear that falls. If you're backed into a corner with no options, look up, He's there. Find loving guidance. I grieve of my babies' unfulfilled lives that I lost, but my heart breaks to think of the lifelong grief of choosing to end a life would bring.

We are taught that we must help others, take a stand for those who are taken advantage of, that each one of us is important and has purpose. Regardless of skin color, religion, physical or mental capabilities or age- very old or very young- we are to regard our fellow humans with the dignity and respect that they deserve. We are all equal, we fight against injustices, we use our lives for good, to speak for those without a voice, we champion for those who are unable. Unborn children are the most vulnerable, most defenseless subcategory of the human race. They deserve a future, they deserve hope. We must not erase generations of our children to our hubris of championing the tragedy of loss of any life.

Champion life. Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves (proverbs 31:8)

In hope for lives gained,

Christina Van Wyck