

I am writing in resounding and enthusiastic support of H.57.

At the time of the public hearing on Wednesday, I will be providing care to women who have chosen to terminate their pregnancy at Planned Parenthood, as I have done for the last seven years. As a nurse and future nurse practitioner, my experiences supporting women as they consider parenting, adoption, or abortion have consistently demonstrated the essential importance of reproductive choice. This choice is heavy and complex for some, certain and easy for others. Without exception, each patient will be asked the same question at the start of their abortion appointment: Are you feeling clear in your decision? For those who choose to terminate that day, their answer is always yes. Sometimes they tell us why: they have children at home and money is a challenge, they just started college, they just finished college, a partner is abusive, a partner is supportive, they just became sober, they are dependent on opioids, they never want children, they want children, just not now... While there is no way to capture the diversity and breadth of their stories, there is a single commonality: each individual had the ability to choose the outcome of their pregnancy.

The right to reproductive freedom is much more than when and if to have children--it is the promise of a life of self-determination. Choice allows my patients to start a family, take care of the family they have, or pursue their careers and passions. The passage of H.57 would ensure that generations of Vermonters are able to access the fundamental right to reproductive choice.

Thank you,  
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