

Dear madams and sirs,

I am writing testimony in regards to Bill H.57 of which I am opposed. It is my express opinion and belief that the Bill be voted down as well as it's counterpart set forth by the Senate. I believe this for the following reasons:

#1. This Bill is being submitted under the guise of "women's healthcare". Health care involves procedures, tests and clinical exams that PREVENT death, not cause it. A "procedure" that causes death, is NOT health care.

#2. This Bill is being submitted to maintain and protect "a woman's reproductive choice". Death is not a choice. There are plenty of "choices" a woman has in her "reproductive choice" should she decide to become sexually active. The options for birth control are wide from abstinence to IUD, hormonal therapy to physical barriers (condoms both male and female), spermicide to getting your "tubes tied". The list goes on. Most of these are very cost effective, covered by insurance or offered at low cost through certain providers and have minimal or no long term lasting effects to a person's health. Abortion is death of a baby/fetus/individual, however one chooses to identify that life. Death is NOT a choice for birth control.

#3. Last year legislation was passed that without "proper" and approved firearms training through a program like Hunter Ed, an individual ages 16-20, could not purchase a firearm. Yet, in our current abortion regulations (or lack thereof), a minor child would not/does not need parental involvement or consent to receive an abortion, is not required to receive any other options beyond abortion and this "procedure" can be completed by "non-physicians". I have to sign a form that my child can get sunscreen or bug spray applied at school but she can be taken by ANYONE, without my knowledge or consent, to get a life altering procedure that will have life long effects, emotionally and mentally, and possibly immediate physical complications to her later reproductive health or result in her death??!! How does this make logical sense?

#4. This Bill is introduced to "protect a woman's reproductive choice and shall not be infringed upon". Our VT Constitution and US Constitution have laws to protect "life". Whether you believe "life" begins when there is a detectable heart beat (6 week gestation it is seen on ultrasound, it's there before that), the fetus "looks human" (13 weeks gestation) etc, you cannot deny this "life" relies on it's "female host" to continue living. It can't medically survive without her. Therefore it's life, literally, is in her hands. Aren't children, after birth, in the same boat? What makes it ok to "terminate life" at 39 weeks gestation but not ok to stop feeding a 3 year old? That may sound extreme to you, but the atrocities being allowed in the State of Vermont under the guise of "reproductive choice" are extreme.. killing "life-dependent-beings" (those who cannot survive on their own) ie: fetus/baby/embryo etc, is not ok, ever. Certainly not "for any reason or no reason at all" as it states currently in our VT statutes.

At 16 years old my step sister, after her first sexual encounter, found herself pregnant. Though scared and facing judgement from her peers, family and society, chose to give him up for adoption. That was 20 years ago and I still admire her now for her courage and responsibility at such a young age. She went on to have three children at the timing of her choice and to surrogate three other children for women who didn't have "reproductive choice". My point is there are other choices beyond abortion and abortion is not birth control.

In closing, if a woman feels she is mature enough to enter into a casual or committed sexual relationship, she better be responsible enough to handle the consequences and be proactive in keeping herself safe, healthy and not impregnated. A woman cannot rely on someone else for those things, it is HER responsibility. And should she become pregnant, it is then her responsibility to deal with that consequence as well. Dealing with it cannot involve death. The lifelong consequences for all involved are far too weighty.

As a parent of two children, I strongly implore the legislators to vote down Bill H57 and its current counterpart in the senate, and to instead focus energy on abortion regulation ( to start with) but abortion abolishment as an end result. They cannot cry “save our children” in 2018 in regards to “school gun violence” and in 2019 then cry to “protect the right to kill children” ( abortion). Not without clearly being labeled hypocrite, that is.

With great sincerity and concern for our youth,  
Kasey Talbot  
Newark, VT

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