

February 4, 2019

Dear Representative,

I am writing to you today to urge you to consider opposition of H57. In the state's attempt to protect the rights of women, the rights of children are further stripped away. A matter of justice for women is killing children each minute.

Do you believe that every human has an equal right to live, or do only some have these rights based on something that none share equally? If it is wrong to hurt others based on gender preferences, skin color, or religion, why is it okay to harm them because they are living in a different location?

I am asking you to question the statements made in the bill and to review the considerations shared below.

*Every individual has the fundamental right to choose or refuse contraception or sterilization. Every individual who becomes pregnant has the fundamental right to choose to carry a pregnancy to term, give birth to a child, or to have an abortion.*

Women also deserve the right to be well informed of their options. Women's rights would include access to all the information available to them about their choices. They deserve the right to hear and see their baby and to consider at length the choice that they will make. They deserve to hear from a family who is struggling with infertility and would like to adopt the baby being carried in the womb. They deserve to hear from other mothers who have been in their shoes. They deserve to know the risk of emotional turmoil that may remain following their choice to abort.

*A fertilized egg, embryo, or fetus shall not have independent rights under Vermont law*

Thirty-eight states have fetal homicide laws<sup>1</sup>. When children are wanted, those who kill them are prosecuted. When they are unwanted, states allow them to be murdered. Will women who want their children no longer be able to seek justice for their unborn children who are murdered?

“We know the principle of justice that when two legitimate rights conflict, the right that protects the higher value should prevail. We deny the right to drive at 100 miles per hour because the value of life is greater than the value of being on time or getting thrills. The right of the unborn not to be killed and the right of a woman not to be pregnant may be at odds. But they are not equal rights. Staying alive is more precious and more basic than not being pregnant.”<sup>2</sup>

*No State or local law enforcement shall prosecute any individual for inducing, performing, or attempting to induce or perform the individual's own abortion.*

If this attempt is “unsuccessful” in that it not only takes away the child's life but also that of the mother, is this individual free of liability for harming the mother? Will this remove regulations from clinics providing abortions for women? How does this protect the health and the rights of women? Since abortion remains legal, the government has not just a right, but a responsibility to make sure that abortionists meet the highest medical and safety standards possible.

---

<sup>1</sup> NCSL. (2018). State laws on fetal homicide and penalty-enhancement for crimes against pregnant women. Retrieved from: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/fetal-homicide-state-laws.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> John Piper (2018). We Know They Are Killing Children - All of Us Know. Retrieved from: <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/we-know-they-are-killing-children-all-of-us-know?fbclid=IwAR1bqazENXjctBXc3Yxv9f9hth6jJC999DQBZ-zhZ9O5Z1ERcbBIJvXIr44>

In closing, I urge you to consider that the part of a woman's body designed to be the most life-giving is now the most unprotected place for the next generation. In a nation where it is illegal to harm eagle eggs, why do we allow for the slaughter of innocent babies which are more valuable than birds? Let us hope that America will once again protect and defend the right to life, from conception until natural death. You can be a part of the solution. Please vote against passage of H57.

Respectfully,

Nicholas and Jenna Richardson  
Montpelier