

My name is Trish Blair and I appreciate this opportunity to share what happened to me, my family and my unborn babies.

Some of you may remember my story. In 2009, as my family and I drove home from school shopping, we were hit in a head-on collision in Bennington, Vermont by a car that crossed the double lines into our lane – rounding a corner – driven by a woman who was high on prescription drugs.

That day, the state of Vermont said no one died – that there were no fatalities as a result of that crash. The woman whose reckless and illegal behavior caused the deaths of my pre-born twins, Kaleb and Harley, never faced criminal charges.

I was rushed by ambulance to the hospital, and there I was told the heartbreaking news that Kaleb no longer had a beating heart.

But my little girl Harley's heartbeat was still strong, and since I was past 24 weeks of pregnancy we were all hopeful that Harley would survive the emergency C-section delivery. I went to sleep in hopes of waking up to at least having my little girl to hold and love. The hospital delivered my beautiful babies, but in the end, neither survived.

Then came further heartbreak. We were to learn that under Vermont statutes my babies were not recognized as human beings and their deaths were not considered "fatalities."

Though dozens of other states have done so, Vermont has never addressed protection or recognition for unborn victims of negligence or violence.

Vermont takes pride in standing up for women's rights, but that's not true - because I'm a woman. I very much wanted my babies and wanted them to live - yet against my will, and without my permission, my babies' lives were taken from them and from me. To this day, there has been no justice for Kaleb and Harley.

I know that any Vermonters who learned of my situation through the extensive press coverage, responded to my situation with great sympathy – I could feel their support – and it helped to get me and my family through some very long and difficult days.

It is important to know that what I endured remains a risk for pregnant mothers and their unborn babies as the Vermont legislature refuses to be proactive. Just

recently a pregnant woman in New York and her unborn baby were murdered - and under the newly-revised New York law on abortion, her murderer will face no charges in the death of the baby he intentionally stabbed.

Reference the New York woman – hold up the article.

My hope was - and is - for passage of Fetal Homicide legislation. In 2010, that bill was introduced in the Vermont legislature (S. 175 - and there are copies for the media on the table) - that legislation was never given a public hearing or proper consideration. Yet H.57 has.

H.57 states: "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."

Why is only the choice to have an abortion grabbing all the attention? When will a law that offers legal protection for a mother and her wanted, chosen and loved unborn children be given the same attention in our state?