

To: The Health and Human Resources Committee.  
My name is Melinda Moulton and I plan to testify this week on zoom in support of Prop 5 the Reproductive Liberty Amendment. I am also submitting my written testimony herewith. Thank you for your time and support of this important amendment.

Warmly,

Melinda Moulton, Huntington, Vermont  
802-316-6666

January 23, 2022

My name is Melinda Moulton from Huntington Vermont. I am here today to continue my lifelong battle to protect the rights and lives of women across this country. Why is this important to me? Because I have witnessed the pain, suffering, and humility that women have experienced because of cruel, inhumane, and selfish control over their bodies. But one experience lives deep within my mind's eye and that is my mother's story. Sixty-four years ago, when I was eight years old my father and mother divorced.

My mother became pregnant by a man who abandoned her when he heard the news. What I remember is that my mother left for what she said was an operation. In fact, she was going to a Woman's hospital where women went to give birth in SECRET without anyone ever knowing.

Well, something went horribly wrong at the "Woman's Hospital," and my Mom died 3 days before Christmas.

I learned many years later that my mother had a baby and gave her up for adoption. After the birth, the unqualified doctor performed a hysterectomy which went wrong. My mother developed peritonitis and over a five-month period she withered away – got pneumonia and died. I was 12 when she died – she was just 40 years old. She left behind four motherless children ages 6 to 16.

Another memory that is seared in my brain is the night my mother was rushed to the hospital because she was found bleeding on the floor of our bathroom. Years later I learned from my aunt that my mother succeeded to abort a pregnancy and it resulted in internal damage to her body. She spent two weeks in the hospital to heal. My mother's life was horrifically compromised because she did not have access to a safe and legal abortion.

Our rights to liberty and freedom to pursue our happiness depends on our autonomy to decide if or when to become a mother.

Let me be very frank, women will always choose their own reproductive destiny - and the reality is – it will either be at the dangerous end of a coat hanger, or it will remain safe in the capable and trained hands of a professional. For our daughters and our granddaughters, we must ensure it remains the latter.

Vermont can stand proud with wisdom, compassion, intelligence, and commitment to equality by passing Prop 5 – The Reproductive Liberty Amendment which will be ratified into our State’s Constitution. We will lead the nation and defy any human being who wants to legislate the control of anyone’s body with their moral, religious, racist, and/or misogynistic beliefs. Let us ensure Reproductive Liberty for all Vermonters – please vote in support of Prop. 5. Thank you.

Melinda Moulton

Huntington, Vermont 05462

802-316-6666