

Honorable Members,

My name is Bryan Conwell, I rise today in support of HB 1373. I rise as a Christian, a man who has made many mistakes and done many terrible and sinful things in my life, and has found that the love of God is found in Jesus Christ through the grace that was purchased for us on the cross, and that by repentance and faith we can be made right, reconciled, and shown mercy by our Creator. I rise as a father of a thoughtful and kind young man, whose name is Logan. I rise as a Marine, who at one time was willing to die for what we said was everyone's right to live. To live in peace, safety, and prosperity. Serving a nation whose people claim to believe that governments are instituted among men, and that chief among their duties is to secure life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all its citizens. That government which does not secure these things for all its citizens is a government that has failed in their duty and itself should be abolished and remade. I rise in accordance with the words of my Lord Jesus Christ the KING of kings and the LORD of Lords as an ambassador of one kingdom to another: "love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself." I rise in accordance with the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment of the US constitution which you, our leaders swore to uphold, and that sent men like me to die for in the sands of far-off lands. Which says in part "No State shall deprive any PERSON of LIFE, LIBERTY OR PROPERTY, WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF LAW AND THAT NO STATE SHALL DENY ANY PERSON UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW."

Honorable Members, are we really ready, to say, here and now that the child in the womb, that the precious image bearer that is your neighbor and my neighbor, that is being knit together in their mother's womb is not a person and therefore not human and unworthy of the same protections we demand for our own lives? Is the child frozen in a vat also unworthy? Will we once again repeat the mistakes and sins of our fathers and fail to protect a class of citizens that is being oppressed by those who have more power, claiming they aren't human therefore we can do what we wish? Will we stop merely at words on the campaign trail in order to compromise for political expediency? I too desire a golden age of America, but I know that God, who's Son raises kingdoms and knocks them over will not redeem a land that sheds the blood of its innocent neighbor. I ask you now, what did my blood and sacrifice truly purchase in those lands that I was sent to if this is what we are willing to do to preserve this holocaust? What did the blood of my slain brothers still buried in those lands purchase for my people great and small if not the right to live and have that life protected from murder? Tell me, now. What kind of people are we? How can you say that you believe in the shed blood of Jesus Christ who died so that those who repent and believe in His name may live, then turn and deny life to those whom you have the power to save?

Christ also warned about ignoring the weightier matters of the law, one being mercy. The state has been given the authority from God according to His word to bear the sword of justice, and to avenge the blood of the innocent. To do so without partiality, equally, to all, the only way to have mercy is on someone who is guilty. I was shown mercy by the justice system of this land.

It was up to the State to weigh the matters surrounding the crime and justly decide the measure of mercy if any that satisfies justice and the weightier matters of the law. No one seeks to criminalize a certain class of people, we simply ask that you recognize that our laws that protect you and I from murder also apply to those in the womb and frozen in vats, who are people, who are image bearers, whom you are charged with their care to protect their lives from those that would spill their blood.

I plead with you here today, to do what you know to be right, what you would demand for yourselves, and that God commands you do as a Magistrates of the Great State of North Dakota. Honorable Members, my brothers and sisters all gathered here today, I love you all and I bid thee farewell.

Sincerely,

Bryan Conwell