

Nanette J. Rodin

January 25, 2021

The Honorable Robin Weisz and Members of the Human Services Committee

Pioneer Room

Re: Letter in favor to HB 1313

I have read the testimonies submitted to you both for and against this bill. I am not a lawyer, so I cannot compete with those letters on what is legally constitutional. It does bring to mind though, that there was a point in our history where it was not Constitutional for a woman to vote, but because people banded together, that law was changed, and I have had the opportunity to vote in our elections since I was 18 (we don't need to figure out how long I have continued to exercising that right). So though I cannot argue on their level with legal jargon, I do know that laws have been in place that should not have been, and we have an opportunity here in this great state of North Dakota to finally draw a line in the sand, as it were, for the lives of women and their children.

I have come today, not to speak about the many unborn people whose lives are taken before they can speak for themselves, but for the women and men who have been told lies. I know they have been lied to because I was lied to. When I was 28 years old, I had an abortion. I ended the life of my first child because; well, first of all from pride. I was ashamed that my lifestyle had caught up to me. I was 28 and should have known better. I didn't want people to know what I had been up to. Second, I was an unwed woman, working a job that barely met my needs much less the needs of a child. Third, the man I had gotten pregnant with, I was not in a real relationship with, we would just hook up once in a while. All of these are listed in my opponent's pages as reasons for me to have had an abortion, for me to have "a choice, a better life."

What my opponents do NOT talk at all about are the psychological, emotional, and spiritual consequences of abortion. It is called Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS)

"Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS) is the condition occurring in both men and women after the abortion experience due to unresolved psychological and spiritual issues. PAS is actually a form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a commonly recognized condition that often follows traumatizing events such as witnessing an act of violence or experiencing a natural disaster."

-H.E.A.R.T. Manual (4th edition) 2014

-Heartbeat International Inc.

This portion was taken from a training manual of a class that I took 3 years ago. I was a participant, speaking for the first time with someone other than my husband about my abortion experience. I had no idea that so many things in my life had been a direct consequence of a procedure that was supposed to "help" me live a better, more confident and secure life. This is NOT what that abortion did, in fact it was just the opposite and it lasted years before I got help. Since that first class, I have had the opportunity to co-facilitate classes with other women who have had abortions, some dealing for the first time after 30 years of psychological turmoil, for their "choice". These women come in on the first session completely defeated, ashamed, guilt-ridden and hurting. We begin to go through the list of symptoms of PAS which include:

1. Behavior Problems
 - a. Chemical/Alcohol dependencies
 - b. Eating disorders
 - c. Sexual disorders
 - d. Workaholism
2. Emotional Problems
 - a. Inability to forget abortion experience
 - b. Periods of intense anger, rage, frustration, depression
 - c. Preoccupation with babies and/or death
 - d. No joy/inner peace
 - e. Flashbacks triggered by sight, sound, smell
3. Relationship Problems
 - a. Discomfort around discussions of abortion, pregnancy
 - b. Inability to forgive others
 - c. Blaming others
 - d. Blaming God
 - e. Inability to trust another
 - f. Inability to bond intimately
 - g. Inability to trust own decisions
4. Self-worth Problems
 - a. Feeling much guilt and shame
 - b. Feeling unforgiven by God, others, self
 - c. Feeling unclean, unworthy
 - d. Self-defeating attitude
 - e. Self-punishing attitude

Nobody talks about this reality of abortion. For each abortion, there is a mother and father that are touched for the rest of their lives by the consequences of death.

I wish that I would have dealt with the 9 months instead of 25 years with the knowledge that I ended the life that I should have protected. I could have given that baby to a couple who would have loved my baby and given them the life I couldn't. There ARE agencies that walk through pregnancies with women. They have classes and supplies and help to assist them every step of the way. I volunteer at Dakota Hope Clinic and it is a free service, beginning to end for women and men facing an unplanned pregnancy.

My opponents have stated that it would be a hardship to many low income people, but they have to go to Fargo anyway...can't they just go 10 more minutes into MN? I want to be part of a group of people who say, "This is the line...it has to start somewhere...let it be here in North Dakota!"

Thank you for your time and patience.

Nanette