

My name is Kay Kiefer. I am a Registered Nurse by profession. I am also a woman who has experienced the aftermath of abortion in my own life.

In 2018, I founded a non-profit organization called We Are Everywhere. This 501(c)3 non-profit organization exists to expand awareness about the extent to which abortion can negatively impact women – and to help women find healing and wholeness after abortion.

Abortion has been an emotionally and politically-charged issue across our nation for decades. It remains so today. Since the U.S. Supreme Court's June 2023 decision in *Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization* returned the issue of abortion back to individual states, there has been a constant barrage of fear-mongering and misinformation on the part of those who support abortion. The loud voices of women who do not regret their own past abortions have been heard across news outlets and social media platforms.

Further, mainstream media sources continue to repeat the mantra that abortion is a necessary – and even a good – part of healthcare for women. They often point to research that seems to suggest that abortion is a benign or even beneficial experience. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Largely missing from the cultural conversation about abortion are the voices of those who regret their past abortions and who have suffered – often alone and in silence – as a result. These voices are missing for a number of reasons. Women often keep past abortion a secret. Many believe they have committed the 'unforgivable sin' and that they will face rejection from family and friends if their secret is revealed. They feel incredibly badly about themselves and believe they deserve the emotional suffering they endure, along with any other misfortunes that occur in their lives as punishment for what they have done.

It is critical that the potential negative impacts of abortion – physical, emotional and even spiritual – be given attention in the public arena. It is especially important that healthcare professionals, mental health care practitioners and clergy be equipped with the information and resources they need to care for those who have been impacted by abortion...in order that healing can occur and a journey toward wholeness can begin.

We Are Everywhere (WAE) is a very small non-profit organization, with a very small budget. There is no paid staff. I am employed as a nurse outside of my home in a position completely unrelated to my work with WAE.

In the past year, WAE became eligible to receive Alternatives to Abortion – Part B funds on a one-time basis. These funds have been used to plan a one-day conference (The Clinical Impact of Reproductive Choice – www.ReproductiveChoiceConference.com) for healthcare professionals which will take place on April 21, 2023 in Fargo, ND. Medical Doctors, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Registered Nurses and Licensed Counselors will receive continuing education hours to use toward license renewal for attending this conference. The conference will inform participants about the potential physical, emotional and spiritual impacts of abortion – as well as looking at available research on the topic and hearing experts in the field provide guidance on plausible clinical scenarios related to the issue of abortion. This conference would not have been possible without the funds we received.

Before you now is SB 2195, which could provide the funding needed for WAE and other entities to continue to provide education and resources to healthcare professionals, mental health care practitioners and clergy so they, in turn, can care compassionately and effectively for those who struggle with past abortion. If this legislation is passed and WAE is able to receive funds from this allocation, we will use those funds to reach beyond the 150 participants who will attend our conference in April.

I am in favor of SB 2195 and appreciate your attention to my written testimony. I am disappointed that I am unable to testify in person, but the requirements of my employment do not allow that at this time.

Kay Kiefer, RN

Founder – We Are Everywhere