

Human Service Committee Members,

My name is Tanner Simons: I am a Christian, a Husband, a Father, and I also serve as one of the Pastors of my local church.

I urge you to give a “do pass” recommendation for HB1373. Mothers considering abortion need the correct kind of support from the people around them. The anxiety of unplanned pregnancies can create a dilemma in which making the right decision to preserve life isn’t easy, especially in a culture that says abortion is an option. Part of the support they need from us is to deter them from a decision that will only cause more pain and brokenness. Many think that this bill will be unloving to mothers who abort their children, but this couldn’t be further from the truth. The law partially serves as a moral compass for people, so I hold myself responsible along with all of you, to only support laws that accord with the ultimate Standard of morality and justice. As long as we have and support laws that allow people to murder their own children, we are guilty of taking them by the hand and encouraging them as they order the pill or drive across state lines to an abortion clinic to make the worst decision of their lives. Nothing could be more unloving than this. While I am sympathetic to the confusion that so many have about the subject of abortion, I am certain that supporting HB1373 is the correct stance:

In the world we live in, everyone must be honest about the fact that some things are more valuable than others. As human beings we can naturally discern the obvious; that there is nothing in all of creation that deserves more dignity and honor than human life. We constantly demonstrate that we are created to already know this fact when we do things like mourn the loss of a family member more than we do a pet. When parents see their children attributing more value to their toys than to their siblings, they rightly discipline them. First responders bravely risk their lives to save people, but are more cautious when it comes to saving material possessions. But why is it that human life deserves dignity and honor? Why are humans more valuable than dogs or homes or businesses? How will we account for this? We know it to be true, but by what standard is this true? Common sense is not a good enough answer, and we can’t say that that’s just the way it’s always been because common sense isn’t so common in our day and things are constantly changing. On what basis can we say that human life must be preserved? The only basis for such an assertion (which assertion we all know to be true) is that according to Scripture, the Creator of all things made Man in His image (Genesis 1:27). Being made in the image of God is a status reserved for humans alone, and since the God of the Bible gave us this status, no one has the right to dispute it (unless they are prepared to argue with the God who began and sustains their own life). Nothing other than the Word of God is capable of defining the value of creation. If we as humanity autonomously declared ourselves to be the most valuable of all creation, then such an assertion would be subject to change.

Now if we were to set aside the Bible as only a “religious book” reserved for “religious things” when it comes to the status of humanity, then we would be compelled to set it aside for other matters as well. We simply cannot borrow from the Bible when it’s easy and then put it back on the shelf when He asks us to do something that offends people. If not for the 6th commandment: “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13) then we would have no way of accounting for the objectively immoral and unjust act of murder. In other words: if not for the Bible, then who says murder is even wrong? If not for the objective Standard of justice set down in Scripture, we would have no way to account for justice itself. The reason why God condemns murderers is because

Man is made in His image. To murder a fellow human is to insult the very worth of the God who's image they bear.

The Same God who made man in His image, who established the objective standard of Justice, says that adults AND preborn humans are EQUALLY his image bearers. (Ecclesiastes 11:5, Genesis 4:1, Psalm 139:13-16). If you hold murder to be wrong for humans that are already born, then by the same standard you must hold murder to be wrong for those inside the womb in all circumstances. Those in the womb deserve equal protection because they have the same status in the eyes of God as you and I do, we are the pinnacle of His creation. To vote against HB1373 would be to say that it is acceptable to merely regulate murder for those who are inside the womb, instead of making it illegal. There is no basis for the distinction between those inside the womb and those outside the womb. If regulated murder of already born humans is unacceptable then why would regulated murder of preborn humans be any different?

I am asking you to be consistent, to use the same standard of justice for those inside the womb as you use for those outside of the womb. (Leviticus 19:15). The God who created us is a God who preserves life. He is so dedicated to preserving life that He was willing to send His Son to die on behalf of all who would turn from their sin and seek His forgiveness, so they wouldn't have to. You all bear the image of God. As an image bearer your job is to reflect the God who created you and for you also to be someone who preserves life. Many humans are counting on you to act according to justice, in your influential position you may just be the ones that God will use to preserve life. If this bill is passed in North Dakota, it may be what leads other states to preserve life by giving equal protection to the unborn. Please support HB1373. Romans Chapter 13 teaches that, as a servant in the civil government, it is your moral duty to preserve life like the God who gave life to you. (Romans 13:1-4).

Thank you,

Tanner Simons