

CHAIRMAN RUBY AND MEMBERS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE. I AM JODY CLEMENS FROM WEST FARGO AND I AM HERE IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1373.

I am a wife, a grandma, and the mother of five children. Four of these children are living. My other child lost his life when I walked through the doors of an abortion facility and tragically ended his life through abortion.

At the time of my abortion, I was 22 years old, single, had completed college and was teaching school and was coaching. I learned of my pregnancy when I made an appointment to visit my doctor as I was not feeling well. He hospitalized me overnight which made me feel as though I had a serious medical problem. Early the next morning my doctor walked into my room, leaned over my bed and looked directly into my eyes and stated *"well young lady the reason you are so sick is because you are pregnant"* and without even taking a breath he looked directly into my eyes and said *'but you do know you can have an abortion.'*

Quite frankly, I knew very little about abortion. Abortion was not a topic that was discussed in my family or among my friends. Yet, I now felt my doctor had diagnosed me and was giving me a prescription on how to solve my medical condition. There was no discussion about the humanity of the child. No discussion about the gestational age of my child. No discussion about the development of the child in my womb. No information on the possible emotional, physical, or spiritual aftermath of abortion. But I was told that if I went through with an abortion that my life would return to normal and I could have a real life with a real future. That was the beginning of the lies I was told.

The father of the baby made the appointment for my abortion. He paid for the abortion, and he accompanied me to the facility and remained in the facility until the abortion was complete. Once inside the facility I was given a stack of papers to sign. I didn't read any of them. But looking back I now know I was signing consent papers for some well- paid stranger to invade the sacred territory of the womb where God was creating life

I did not meet the physician performing the abortion until I was in the procedure room. But I recall everything about this room. Every sight, sound, and smell. But most vividly I recall that during the procedure I turned my head to the side as tears started steaming down my cheeks and knowing that my baby was now dying or dead and what I had done I could never undo. My decision to end the life of my child was irreversible and a sense of justice arose within me that could not be silenced. I knew an innocent little human being had just died and the guilty was going unpunished. My baby had committed no crime, no offense, and had no mode of self-defense. My child had a fundamental and constitutional right to life. He was entitled to equal justice under the law; but was denied it.

I left that abortion facility, I left the father of the baby, I left my teaching career, and I lived for ten years with undealt sin, unresolved guilt, and a sense of justice that cried out to be satisfied.

Eventually through the mercy and grace of God I was set free from the pain and grief of my abortion. Since then, I have devoted my life to assist women suffering the aftermath of their abortion. There are many.

When I learned of House Bill 1373, I knew I needed to testify in support of this bill. In spite of all the lies and gaslighting surround the content of House Bill 1373 I am thankful we are here to testify to the true intent of this bill and dismantle the fear and scare tactics that have been spread about the true intent of House Bill 1373.

THE TRUTH OF HOUSE BILL 1373

House Bill 1373 simply gives unborn children equal justice under the law and classifies unborn children as human beings.

House Bill 1373 does not ban IVF. Individuals who choose to use to create children through IVF will have equal protection and justice under the law. This bill protects these embryos.

House Bill 1373 agrees with science that human life begins at fertilization.

I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU A PICTURE WORDS OF WHAT THE BEGINNING OF A HUMAN BEING IS AND WHY THIS HUMAN BEING NEEDS AND DESERVES EQUAL JUSTICE AND PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW.

House Bill 1373 affirms the truth that there is only one true victim in an abortion. That one person is the child in the womb and this child deserves equal justice under the law.

Victim by the mere definition of the word implies innocence. Without guilt.

True love calls those guilty of sin to repentance. If you see women who participate in abortion as victims, she has no need to repent because victims have no need of repentance. It leaves her with no need for Christ and no need for the Gospel. What it leaves her with is her guilt, shame, sorrow, self-hatred, and her overwhelming grief.

It is a fatal flaw not to call women to repentance after their abortion so they know the love and forgiveness available to them.

House Bill 1373 will deter women from having abortion and spare them the devastating aftermath of their decision to murder their child.

I have visited with many women who say they would have never had an abortion if it would have been illegal to do so. It would deter woman from having an abortion if their child would have been granted equal protection and equal justice under the law and it would have spared these women a life time of heartache and regret.

In conclusion, and for the reasons stated above, I strongly support House Bill 1373 and the definition of human being. We are all fearfully and wonderfully made from the time of fertilization and we all need and deserve equal protection and equal justice under the law. I urge you Chairman Ruby and the distinguished members of the House Human Services to support House Bill 1373.