

February 27, 2020

Representative John Lesch, Chair
House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee
563 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Lesch and Members of the House Judiciary Finance and Civil Law Committee,

I write in support of HF 3749, the Minnesota Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act.

When I learned I was pregnant with my second child in early February 2016 I was thrilled.

A few months later when I went to my medical clinic to learn the sex of the baby I learned instead that the pregnancy was “not compatible with life”. I learned that I would either miscarry at some unpredictable point in the remaining 20 weeks or the baby would die moments after birth.

I was heartbroken.

I seized the small amount of control I had in that horrendous situation and decided to have an abortion. I was referred to Planned Parenthood.

On Friday May 13th my husband drove me to the clinic in St. Paul. Before we could confirm the address on the building or see the “Planned Parenthood” name I saw the protestors. It was two older men and one older woman along with one teenager in a college sweatshirt. We had to pass them to drive into the parking ramp. Their signs communicated their negative judgement of me. They looked at me, shouting something through my closed car window, desperate to engage with me. The older woman walked up to the car and attempted to pass me a pamphlet, which I ignored.

The care I received at Planned Parenthood was excellent, but it was still one of the most difficult days of my life. I was consumed with grief, a really complicated grief, and the fact that there were protestors there for the sole purpose of eliciting shame made me feel even more lost.

Liz Van Heel
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