**HF 1 – A Bill on Reproductive Health Rights**

Members of the Health Finance and Policy Committee, it is an honor to speak before you today (1/5/22). I am a wife, mother, and home educator who’s passionate about the well-being and education of children. Today as you contemplate this bill which encompasses topics such as women’s reproduction and abortion, I want to invite you for a moment to step back to consider the bigger picture behind these issues by entertaining two foundational questions:

***What is a human being?*** -- and -- ***When does human life begin?***

You see, the answers to these two questions determines your beliefs that will shape your policy.

**First of all: What is a human being?** What do you personally believe? What do your constituents believe? What beliefs were our country and our constitution founded on?

Some believe that a human being derives from a random collection of tissue that came together and managed to organize itself in such a way to enable its development from a fish to a mammal to an ape to a conscientious human being.

While others believe that all human beings are created by an Intelligent Designer, who gave each person equal, unalienable rights, such as the right to life. This is the belief of those who founded our country and wrote the Declaration of Independence.

In the first view, a human being is simply one form of matter with no particular assigned moral value, while the second view holds that every human life is a divine gift.

**The Government has a foundational and sacred responsibility to protect human life** – which brings us to our second big picture question:

**At what point does a human life begin?**...

Because THAT is the exact point at which the Government is obligated to protect it. We need to find consensus around defining this point.

Many will argue that human life begins at conception, but not all will agree. However, perhaps we can find consensus around a more clear-cut “Heartbeat Rule.” Afterall, when contemplating the end of life, we all can easily recognize that if an elderly person’s heart stops beating, their body has died, and they are no longer living.

Similarly can we not all recognize that whenever a heart begins to beat, there exists a person who is alive, even in utero? If a human life ends with a heart stopping, surely a distinct human life exists whenever a heart starts beating.

**The point at which life begins is the point at which the Government MUST PROTECT & Defend Life.**

In America we have a founding principle that one person’s rights extend only to the point at which they infringe upon another person’s rights. This same principle must apply to the pregnant mother and the unborn child. A pregnant woman’s reproductive rights only extend to the point at which her unborn child’s rights begin. An appeal to a woman’s reproductive rights can never supersede the unborn child’s right to life.

To be sure, women have many rights and options along their reproductive journey – but the termination of a life is never one of them.