



January 4, 2023

To whom it may concern:

It has come to my attention that the Minnesota House of Representatives Health, Finance and Policy Committee is introducing a new law codifying abortion up to birth. I strongly urge you to vote against this measure. Since the overturn of the *Roe v Wade* Supreme Court decision that sent the abortion issue back to the states, abortion has become the focus of Minnesota politics. Although the state constitution established a right to abortion in Minnesota, that is not enough for some leaders. Judge Gilligan stripped away the common-sense measures that were in place to protect women, like informed consent and requiring physicians to perform abortions.

Now politicians want to allow abortion through all nine months of pregnancy, up until birth, adding Minnesota to the list of only 7 states that allow such barbaric treatment of the weakest and most defenseless humans. Globally, only 6 nations allow abortion until birth with no restrictions, and those nations include such violators of human rights like China, North Korea, South Korea and Vietnam. In fact, 94% of countries (186) have national restrictions on abortion in the second trimester. Except in cases of rape, incest, fetal anomaly, or economic hardship, 56 countries—including 48 of 51 European countries—ban abortion after 14 weeks. (*Family Research Council*)

Assuming positive intentions that the proponents of this measure are doing so out of a desire to help women, one must consider why abortion up until 20 weeks is not sufficient time for a woman to decide her plans for her pregnancy. Very few women pass the halfway point of pregnancy without knowledge of the pregnancy or thought about her and the baby's future. The current law presents ample time for a woman to make an informed decision.

Furthermore, according to the state's own report, *Induced abortions in Minnesota, January-December 2021: Report to the legislature (2021)*, only **one** of the 10,136 abortions performed in the state in 2021 was past the 24 week gestational age (with 118 not reported). That data would indicate that expanding the gestational limit is wholly unnecessary, unless the goal is to have even more abortions instead of making them "safe, legal, and rare." Clearly the 10,136 women who procured abortions in Minnesota had ample opportunity to terminate the lives of their children within the timeframe currently allowed by the state.

And make no mistake, they are indeed terminating the life of a child. By 5 weeks gestation, "your *baby's* heart will form" (Mayo Clinic website, emphasis added). By 14 weeks, the baby's gender is apparent, and by 18 weeks, the baby can hear sound. At 24 weeks, the current Minnesota limit, the baby has fingerprints, eye movements, and all the anatomy of a human outside the womb. Please note that the Mayo Clinic website section on fetal development refers throughout to the fetus as a baby, because those who follow science understand that an unborn child does not become something other than a human child at any point in its development.

As the executive director of a pregnancy help center, I routinely witness women seeing their unborn baby on the ultrasound for the first time, and it is a powerful moment that often changes hearts and minds. When a woman sees the image of her child, she is frequently moved by the understanding that the child is hers to protect and nurture, not to destroy.

Pregnancy help centers like ours offer women real help and support through material supplies, financial assistance, parenting classes, life coaching, counseling, and countless other services. They are empowered by other women believing in them and telling them they can be both good moms and successful students, entrepreneurs, or employees. Expanding abortion tells women they can't achieve and be parents at the same time, a lie that millions of women have proven false.

If we as Minnesotans truly care about women and the rights of the less fortunate in our state, we should be putting legislative effort into supporting families, funding childcare, and promoting adoption and other resources that support women and children. It does not empower women to encourage them to kill their own children at an advanced gestational age. This measure is too extreme, does not reflect the wishes and sensibilities of the constituency, and does not live up to who we are as Minnesotans.

Please vote against this, and persuade your colleagues to do so as well.

Sincerely,

Anne Fredrickson

Executive Director

Alpha Women's Center

651-894-2882