

Alicia Wilson
Clinton
LD 1614

Good morning, and thank you for reading my testimony. I am here to speak in favor of LD 1614, to require an ultrasound and counseling before an abortion. Nine years ago I aborted my baby at 7 weeks. Nothing prepared me for the years of grief that would follow that day. After suffering inexplicable sorrow for about five years I sought counseling through a pregnancy resource center. There I found comfort and healing from much of that pain. In talking with counselors I recognized how unprepared and uninformed I was during my abortion appointment. I was given a "counseling" session prior to the procedure which consisted of me violently sobbing to the counselor that I did not want to go through with aborting my baby. Her response was to hand me a box of tissues and tell me she would wait until I was ready. I quickly learned that I was expected to leave that room in agreement with going forward. There was no informed consent regarding the procedure, at least not in terms I would expect as someone who works in the medical field and is expected to provide patients with a complete list of options, and expected outcomes. There was no counseling to offer alternative options. The rest of the appointment consisted of several workers confirming to me that I was making the right choice. I understand they were under the assumption that they were helping me to move forward with a decision I had already committed to. I was not allowed to see the ultrasound, and was told it would all be over soon and I could go on my way. I later learned that 90% of women who are able to see their baby on ultrasound prior to an abortion will change their mind. This statistic highlights the importance of true informed consent. Without recognizing and agreeing the entirety of what they are about to do, so many women are stuck in a place of deep grief and regret after an abortion that they are unable to process or heal from. We often focus on the pain of the women seeking an abortion, understandably, as they are certainly dealing with trauma. Unfortunately we have forgotten about the women after abortion and do not understand how an uninformed decision produces trauma of its own that does not simply dissolve. As a society we will likely never agree on the topic of abortion, but if women are given the chance to be informed about the choice they are making, to view their ultrasound, and to process the decision with a counselor; perhaps the ensuing grief will be lessened. LD 1614 will give women the right to informed consent, to acknowledge and understand the choice they are making, and be given the chance to speak to a counselor to process their decision prior to its finality, before it is too late to reconsider. Please support LD 1614.