

Senator Carney and Representative Moonen, Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Brooke Buzulchuck and I am a resident of Windham. I am here to testify in opposition to LD1619.

On a sunny day in April 2005, I drove to Portland Planned Parenthood and ended an unplanned pregnancy. Since that day, I have remembered and regretted "my choice." I used to be a hopeful, vibrant young lady, who loved life and had dreams. That day changed it all. I stopped dreaming, I was depressed, and life no longer had hope or meaning. I took my child's life and there was nothing I could do to bring him back. The darkness and guilt were overwhelming, and the regret and shame were debilitating. Who told me this was going to fix it all? Who told me it was my choice? They lied! Nothing felt fixed and I surely wasn't empowered by my choice, I was never offered any other choice, planned parenthood didn't ask if I considered parenting or adoption, they just prescribed me 2 pills that would take care of my issue. I wanted to turn back time. I had never been depressed, until now.

I was 9 weeks pregnant when I aborted and my mental state from the physical and emotional trauma was unstable at best. This new bill would allow a baby that could survive outside of the womb to be killed. What will the mental and physical impact be on these women and men? In a society which prides itself on diversity and inclusiveness, we should never view a marginalized life as a "death sentence."

Since my biggest mistake, I have had counseling, prayer, and many in-depth conversations with post abortive women to help me heal and forgive myself. I now work for a pregnancy center that helps other women heal from their past abortions. My observation of the post abortive women I've helped is depression, anxiety and suicide rates are at an all-time high and a real concern. A provocative new study showed women who had an abortion were 34 percent more likely to develop an anxiety disorder, 37 percent more likely to experience depression, 110 percent more likely to abuse alcohol, 155 percent more likely to commit suicide, and 220 percent more likely to use marijuana. Please hear me: we currently do not have the resources to support the mental health crisis. Please take into consideration the support necessary for the women and men who will be physically traumatized, grief-filled, and shameful of their late term abortions and oppose this new bill.

Coleman, P. (2011). Abortion and mental health: Quantitative synthesis and analysis of research published 1995–2009. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 199(3), 180-186. doi:10.1192/bjp.bp.110.077230