

I am the mother of 12 children, 6 of them are alive, and 6 of them are dead. I lost my first child at 28 weeks. The ultrasound showed the body of my little girl, and her heartbeat, still and silent. I delivered her tiny lifeless body, and held her to me for a long time. A nurse placed her hands and feet into molds for me. I was holding a unique little person, with brown hair. She didn't need to be a certain size, or age, or have a certain skill, or intelligence level, for me to love her. She was my child and her death was shocking, like a sharp knife stabbing me in the heart, and every morning the pain started again. I started taking sleeping pills, and I wanted to sleep forever and never wake up. It was a nightmare I lived every day and dreamt every night.

For many women who have had an abortion, they can't live through the nightmare, and unlike mine, their nightmare gets worse with time. Some even find a way to sleep forever and never wake up. (In a Welsh study of 408,000 women, post-abortive women were 225% more likely to commit suicide. In a US study of 173,279 post-abortive women, after 4 years the suicide rate was 160% higher for these women, than women who gave birth). It doesn't matter that she was persuaded into the abortion, convinced it would solve her problems, that she couldn't possibly overcome her struggles and care for her child. She was pregnant and now she is not. She knows this was her baby, not a potential life, but a life with great potential. Her baby once had a heartbeat, but now it is silent and still, and her life will never be the same. So, I ask you today, isn't Maine's suicide rate high enough? Is it really helping women to expand a practice that increases suicide in mothers?

I have children with disabilities. I have had preemies, nursed 3 pound babies. I have had miscarriages of tiny babies still in their amniotic sacs. I have been poor and had difficult living situations. At all times, they were my children, worthy of life and protection. Someone's helplessness or dependency should motivate us to protect her, not to destroy her. The slippery slope of "safe, legal, and rare," has now become, "abortion on demand and without apology, any

time, for any reason.” Leo Alexander, a consultant at the Nuremberg trials said “the holocaust began with a subtle shift in medical ethics, with the acceptance of the attitude that there is such a thing as a life not worthy to be lived.” So, I ask you today, where will the slippery slope of LD 1619 lead?”

The truth is abortion is so barbaric, so cruel, that those of us who have the proof, the pictures, the videos, the stories, can’t understand why you won’t listen, you close your eyes, you say it is fake. Your work in not requiring women be warned of the consequences, opposing them from seeing ultrasounds, not requiring accurate information on fetal development and using dehumanizing language, not requiring health inspections or information of alternative care to keep their babies, suggests some of you are more interested in women having abortions than in allowing them to make their own informed choices based on factual data. So, I ask you today, why would you want women to have more abortions?

It is dangerous when people in power are free to determine if other less powerful lives are meaningful and worthy of protection. You all have that power today, the power to say that a baby past the age of viability, can be considered worthless, her little body disposed of in the trash as medical waste, or sold for “research,” that is profitable. Please protect the innocent and the vulnerable, protect these mothers and their babies. Remember the words of Mother Teresa, on a visit to the US, “...We must bring the child back to the center of our care and concern. This is the only way that our world can survive, because our children are the only hope for the future. ...Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.” Vote No on LD 1619.

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