

**BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF OHIO
HB228
CHAIRMAN WHITE AND MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE**

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF ELIZABETH CLYNE

June 13, 2006

My name is Elizabeth Clyne from Columbus, Ohio and I am state leader for Operation Outcry Ohio. I am privileged to share my story and speak to you on behalf of the women who have experienced abortion in Ohio.

Suddenly, I began to get sick. Morning, noon and evening I was in the bathroom throwing up. One of my new friends said, "You're pregnant." I shook my head in disbelief, I couldn't be pregnant, I had gone on the pill! When my fiancée came home that evening, I told him what I suspected. The next morning, he took me for a pregnancy test. When we were given the results I sat there in stunned silence. I was pregnant.

The nurse stated that I was almost twelve weeks pregnant and didn't have much time to decide what to do. As I looked across the office at my fiancée, he said, "We don't have a choice Elizabeth! You know I'm Catholic, and I can't marry you if you're pregnant, and I'm certainly not going to take you home to meet my family if you're pregnant! I already have one son out of wedlock; my family will disown me if I have another one. We don't have a choice. If you want to marry me, you have to abort it," he finished. His words gutted me like a knife.

Then the nurse began to speak rather quickly, "After all, it's *not* a baby yet," she informed me, "A blob of tissue, a mass really..." her voice trailed off in my ear. Everything within me wanted to run, as fast as I could.

The nurse reached across her desk and as she patted my hand, said, "Sweetie, listen. You're planning a wedding; nobody has to even know about this nasty little mistake. I know you're ashamed!" We can take care of it and you can go right on with your wedding plans and nobody will ever know."

Finally, I looked up at them and feeling incredibly pressured, I slowly agreed to have the procedure. They had both told me that this was the only option I had and I certainly couldn't go home now to mother. "She wouldn't understand." I rationalized. I felt trapped and scared.

The nurse made arrangements for an appointment the next day. I thought, "Surely I've got a little more time than that to think about this?"

I'm not sure if the numbness started that day, or the next, I just remember feeling numb all over for a very long time. It was an emotional deadness that lasted from that day to over fifteen years.

My fiancé told me that we needed \$300 to pay for the abortion. I told him that I didn't have that kind of money. He looked at me and said, "Elizabeth, we *have* to do this, we don't have any other choice". "Give me your engagement ring." I looked down at my hand in shock and

disbelief. Suddenly, all the love, affection and attention I had needed from a man, became some very ugly emotions to me.

He drove to a local Pawn Shop. He reached for my hand and slipped my beautiful engagement ring off my finger. The ring he had so proudly purchased only months before and placed on my finger, promising to love me “forever,” was now being sold to hide our sin.

As I sat there waiting for him to return, I kept telling myself, “No-one will ever know.” I wanted to call my mother, but he refused to allow me and said we couldn’t tell anyone what we were doing. I felt so isolated.

We drove to the facility in silence. I let him think I was asleep as I turned my body to the side so he couldn’t see my face or my tears. When we arrived, my fiancée checked us in while I looked around the room, observing the nervous behavior of all the men in the waiting room. Then a nurse came through a door and ushered me back to a dressing room.

She took me into an office and explained the “procedure”. She told me that I wouldn’t feel or remember a thing. She told me that abortion had no side effects or long term ramifications, it was safe birth control. Then she gave me some pills to take. Everything within me said to run away and not look back.

She took me to a large room filled with young women. It was a big open room with lots of hospital gurneys positioned everywhere with women lying on them. It reminded me of a factory assembly line. A nurse motioned for me to lie down on one of the beds.

Moments later, the abortionist arrived and he put on a blue gown, gloves and a face shield with plastic down the front of it to guard his eyes and face. I thought this was odd and that something wasn’t right. The medicine I was given was supposed to put me to sleep, but it didn’t work. None of the other women were asleep either. I took my feet out of the stirrups, raised my hand for the nurse and told her that I had changed my mind. She and some other nurses came over and pushed me back down on the bed.. The nurse said, “It’s too late to change your mind now! Hasn’t that medicine taken affect yet?”

“No,” I replied. “Just lay there quietly,” she scolded me, “I’ll be right back.” Then I got really scared I lay back on the bed, terrified.

As I looked at the ceiling, I heard the sound of a machine starting up that sounded like a high powered vacuum cleaner. The nurse came back and gave me more pills to swallow and rushed away. The next thing I heard terrified me even more. These young women screamed and I heard the sucking and gurgling sounds of this machine. I sat up and saw the abortionist going from bed to bed rather quickly with the machine’s pole or wand in his hand. By this time, some of the young women were screaming blood-curdling screams for him to stop. These moments would be burned in my mind forever.

Before I could react, the abortionist was in front of me. I started struggling to get up. “I’ve changed my mind! The medicine isn’t working! Stop! Stop! Please stop!” I was pushed back down on the gurney and he inserted the machine’s long pole-like wand into

my body and it felt like he was ripping and sucking out every internal organ. I felt a tearing, burning and ripping in my female organs, and groin area. It was pain like I had never known before, and unlike any other pain I have ever felt since. The horrible suctioning and gurgling sound as the tissue passed into the machine's large container would give me nightmares and torment me for days and nights, and decades to come.

I continued to scream, "I've changed my mind! Stop! Don't kill my baby, **PLEASE**, don't kill my baby," Within five minutes, it was over and I was being wheeled to a recovery room. I wailed and cried as one of the nurses came over to me and said, "Be quiet, it's over. You're scaring the other girls!" I could feel myself going into shock. I curled up into a fetal position as my body shook uncontrollably. Lying there alone, I sobbed until my eyes were swollen shut. I learned a new level of sorrow. After awhile, a nurse came and helped me dress. She took me out to my fiancée and I collapsed into his arms. As he looked into my face, I saw his face turn white; pale white. "We've killed our baby," I heard myself sobbing to him over and over again. He asked the nurse if I was okay and she told him quite matter-of-factly that I was fine, to take me home, and she walked away, leaving us standing there.

When I arrived at our apartment, I curled up in the corner on the floor, in the same fetal position I had been in at the facility. I lay there for three days without eating. When I got up to go to the bathroom I poured puddles of blood from my body. Three days later, my fiancé took me home to my mother. He told my mother what had happened and then left, never to return. I finally slept and when I woke up, my mother was sitting beside me with a washcloth, rubbing my head as she had done when I was a little girl and was sick with fever. She looked at me as tears streamed down her face. As I looked up into her eyes, I felt real shame for the first time in my life. She asked me to talk about it, and I couldn't, not even with my mother. I realized that by killing my baby, I had killed a part of me.

In the 20 years that followed, I felt numbness in my heart and my soul, but I never acknowledged or faced it. It became a skeleton, and I closed and **LOCKED** the closet door, deceiving and convincing myself that if I buried it deep enough in the back of the closet, it would one day go away. I hid the ugliness from everyone. It was years before I could turn on a vacuum cleaner or even vacuum a floor as it would make me physically ill. The memory haunted me every time I closed my eyes.

At the age of 36, I became pregnant with my second daughter, Faith. At five weeks gestation, an ultrasound revealed a heart that was not beating and my OBGYN told us to abort **THIS** baby. We refused and walked out. We went home and prayed for a week. When we went back the next week to have the "DNC" in her office, we begged them to please do one more ultrasound. Reluctantly, she agreed. A few moments later she screamed! There, on the ultrasound screen monitor was a living, breathing-heartbeat of some one I'd like to introduce you all to...my daughter Faith Lydia Clyne.

Today I sit before you a woman who has buried two daughters from Incompetent Cervix; had two golf-ball sized lumps removed from my breast, that I was told was possibly breast cancer; suffered early premature menopause at the age of 39; and was told that normally, any one thing can cause these medical issues, however, in my case, **ONE** abortion ties them all together and is the defining link. When I was just a young girl, too afraid to go to my mother, and with nowhere else to turn, I listened so someone's lies, lies that would forever alter my life, and the life of my

family. Now I live with the every day FACT that the lumps MAY return, or that the recent growth found on one of my ovaries could be ovarian cancer, another link to abortion. But the most traumatizing fact of them all that I live with every day, is having to tell a little girl WHY she has three sisters who she cannot share her life with. If I had been told about the physical and emotional side effects of abortion, I would have three daughters now, instead of only one who calls me mama.

Thank you for your time.