

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

JUNE 13, 2006

Personal Testimony of Stephan Daugherty

My name is Stephan Daugherty and I am from Centerville, Ohio. I was fifteen years old when I went to Planned Parenthood and found out that I was pregnant, I was scared to death, and I wondered "How was I going to tell my parents that I had gotten pregnant?" All of the services at Planned Parenthood were free except the ultrasound that would tell me how far along I was. Since I was too young to be employed I of course could not afford it and I was too afraid to tell my parents. One of the staff members did however inform me of something called a Judicial Bypass. They told me by going through the Ohio juvenile court system I could get an abortion without my parent's consent. My parents would never have to know I had gotten pregnant. At the time, this seemed like the answer I was looking for. It seemed like a "quick fix" and the only way I could get out of telling my parents I was pregnant. I had no idea what I was getting into. Under the direction of Planned Parenthood, I obtained the judicial bypass. Planned Parenthood even gave me payment vouchers to pay for half of the abortion.

On September 8, 1999, I went to Women's Med Center in Kettering, Ohio to have the abortion. I signed in at their front desk and then met with one of their staff members to discuss the procedure. In the meeting I was not shown anything on fetal development. I still did not know how far into the pregnancy I was. I asked the staff member if there were any mental or physical side effects, she assured me that abortion was a very common, and safe procedure and that any side effects were rare. Generally women feel relieved after going through the procedure. They then took me upstairs to where the abortions were performed. They performed an ultrasound; the first one I had been given during my pregnancy. The staff member kept the screen turned away from me towards her so I couldn't see anything. She told me I was nine weeks along and one more day would have put me at another one hundred and fifty dollars and two days at the clinic.

A short time later, the abortionist, Dr. Haskell came in and I was told to wear a mask and breathe deeply to help ease some of the pain. Then I was given a shot and heard the sound of a loud suction. It lasted only a few minutes. Then I was taken to a waiting room where I was given a heating pad for the cramping.

I was told that I would experience an extended menstrual period for about four weeks, but instead I bled for six months straight sometimes releasing golf ball size blood clots. I had to go back to the facility for follow-up visits and they could not stop the bleeding. Finally I had to inform my mother as my physical state was getting worse, I had become anemic from all the blood loss and that's when we found out that the person who had performed my abortion was not

licensed at any of the local hospitals, so we had to go to my family doctor to receive proper medical treatment.

I was then referred to a psychiatrist because I began to have awful nightmares and anxiety attacks. I would break out in hives for hours. My psychiatrist said that she thought I should try some antidepressants to help me cope with the thoughts of my abortion. Physically I was not much better. I had stopped having periods all together and stayed that way for an entire year. Our family doctor referred me to a specialist where I discovered that as a result of the abortion, my body had experienced a hormone crash and they would have to put me on very high doses of estrogen to try and balance them out.

I felt like I wanted to die. I went into a deep depression and had thoughts of suicide all the time. My depression became so severe, that I was unable to go to school and had to go into a home school program recommended by the school counselor for the remainder of the year.

Since then, I have since gone through years of hormone therapy which can't seem to be corrected yet, as well as psychological counseling all a direct result of my abortion. In this state, if you are under the age of eighteen you cannot be seen by a physician without parental consent yet I was able to have an abortion, an invasive surgical procedure without either one of my parents consent or knowledge. It has caused me years of mental and emotional anguish, and physical damage that to this day, seven years later has not been corrected.