

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

**PREPARED TESTIMONY OF SAMANTHA RINEHART**

**JUNE 13, 2006**

My name is Samantha Rinehart and I am from Alliance, Ohio.

As a woman in the Army, I was ridiculed by my male sergeant who said that I would be pregnant within two months because "all females did". So when I become pregnant I was mortified because he was right and I felt that my career in the Army had to come first, before any babies.

I knew I had to act fast and I had to go through the chain of command. From my squad leader to my commander all encouraged me to have an abortion and told me how commendable my actions were, however I had to have it done off base since the military hospital wouldn't do abortions.

Upon arrival at the clinic, they took my \$300.00 and rushed me in to sign papers. I remember them telling me that I may have cramping for several days. I was then ushered in to get an ultrasound which I was not permitted to see. The lady stated "Yep there it is." And I remember thinking "This is wrong." There was no time to change my mind. Before I knew it there was mask on my face, my feet where being placed in stirrups and the procedure was underway.

When I came to, I was taken to a cot in a room with partitions that reminded me of a blood donor's clinic. I could hear women crying as I lay in this recovery room and I vowed I would not cry over this choice I had made, even though I felt sick in my soul. At that point, I turned off all emotion and never spoke of it for years. I even lied about it to the doctors when I got back in the States.

When I aborted my child, a part of me died with him. I was no longer able to express normal emotions or any emotion. I became numb to the joys and sorrows of life. My husband eventually left me.

It took 16 years before the reality of what I had done sank in. When I finally came to terms with the damage I had done to my life and my family, by one selfish act, I was crushed and the pain was unbearable. I had to seek counseling so that I could function as a mother and a wife.

I have found that the consequences of abortion far outweigh any circumstances of unplanned pregnancies. By volunteering at the pregnancy center, I counsel post-abortive women and have seen many women in crisis. In my own life and career, I have met many mothers as

well, who have chosen life in scary situations including rape, incest and even being told that their babies would be deformed. Never, ever has any one of them said “I wish I had chosen abortion.” On the other hand, every single woman I have ever met who has had an abortion grieves her baby and regrets her choice.

Please push to ban abortion in Ohio. Abortion has only proved to kill our children, irreparably wound our women and weaken our men in this country. Even though the life that grew inside me was brief it was real and I remain a mother of a dead baby. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.