

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

**PREPARED TESTIMONY OF LAURA VAN DEUSEN**

**JUNE 13, 2006**

My name is Laura Van Deusen and I am from Newark, Ohio.

I had my abortion in June, 1980, when I was 24 years old. I was married and living in Saudi Arabia when I learned I was pregnant. My marriage was very unstable and my husband told me abortion was the only option when I told him I was pregnant. I called my parents in the US, and they also felt abortion was the only option. They said that they would take care of it. I flew home to Virginia, and my Mom and Dad took me to the abortion clinic and waited for me. The trauma of the event left me only two memories: walking out of the waiting room into the hall, and the abortionist, when he had finished, saying "Let's see if we got it all." I blocked out all other memories of the abortion.

After the abortion, I began to suffer behavior problems, like being a workaholic, emotional problems, like rage and depression, relationship problems, like being uncomfortable around pregnant women and being unable to trust others, and self-worth issues like guilt and shame. I went to many counselors over the years, but none could find the root cause. After completing a post-abortion recovery class, I now know that I have suffered post abortion syndrome, a subset of post-traumatic stress disorder, for more than two decades.

Sterility is another side-effect of abortion that occurs and I am one of those women. If I had been informed that I was trading my ability to have any more babies for an abortion, I would not have had the abortion. The pain of watching other women have babies, attending baby showers, and holding babies when I could never have my own has been an unbearable burden over the years.

I am hoping that abortion can be banned, to save the women from the pain that I suffered as well as the unborn babies. Thank you.