

**Testimony on Senate Bill No. 152 SUB A  
and R.I. Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
March 5, 2019**

Good Afternoon. My name is Joe Cavanagh. I am a lawyer and I reside in Warwick. I have testified before you in the past and thank you for the opportunity to express my opposition to the so-called Reproductive Health Care Act, which is radical and unnecessary. This proposed legislation is overbroad, imprecise, and untimely as detailed in the several excellent legal memoranda submitted in advance to the Committee from Paul B. Linton, Esq. I urge you to consider this legal analysis.

In my short time here, I want to focus on: (1) the false premise that this proposed law is necessary now to preserve abortion from a possible reversal by the US Supreme Court of its Roe v. Wade decision, which created the constitutional right to abortion, and (2) the inaccurate contention that this proposal is a mere “codification” of Roe v. Wade at the state level.

Both of those points are erroneous. This proposal far exceeds the parameters of Roe v. Wade. This is a loaded bill which would put our state in the forefront of what amounts, bluntly, to baby-killing laws.

First, I urge you do not be fooled or lulled into this false narrative that there is a clear and present danger to the Roe v. Wade decision.

Same as in the past two years, I ask: why do this now? There is no present “danger”, no imminent case pending, which presents a so-called “threat” to a Roe v. Wade reversal or even modification. The proposed law is unnecessary. If and when, a case looms where Roe v. Wade is at issue, and even if Roe were overturned, the subject of abortion regulation would then return to the state and local level where reasonable compromises could then be enacted. Then our state, our legislature, and people will engage in the democratic process about what RI laws should be. Until that time, a push to expand or codify the abortion program is ill-conceived and untimely.

This legislative push is opportunism by abortion strategists. Their tactics: (1) build up this concern about Roe v. Wade through fear-mongering, liberal media, lobbyists, and by peer pressure; (2) make the leadership look to be unfair and out of step; and (3) jam this through by getting the membership to go along, supposedly in step with the smart, progressive view.

You, members of the Senate and your colleagues in the House, are being misled, cajoled, maybe some bullied, by abortion ideologues, to vote for unnecessary legislation on the fake premise that the rights created by Roe v. Wade are in jeopardy.

No thinking person in our country who has seen and heard the public focus on the national effort by abortion advocates, particularly in NY, Virginia, Vermont and other states can fail to see the extreme and radical push to expand so-called abortion rights. Infanticide, the killing of a baby, is deemed acceptable. Riding this false construct that the

rights derived from Roe v. Wade are at risk, the abortion proponents hope to push expansive bills through state legislatures.

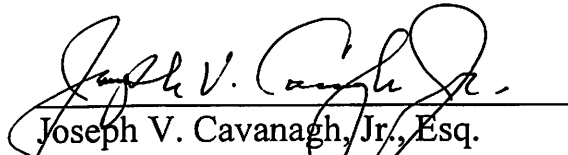
Please, each of you, not just on the Committee, but each member of the Senate and House as individuals with courage and character, don't be boxed in by this wave of pressure.

I urge you to consider how just in the last few weeks many people, not only in RI, but throughout the country have been woken up, have been shaken up by the horror of the abortion agenda. Hiding behind euphemisms like "medical procedures," "reproductive rights," and "choice," the abortion industry avoids the raw reality, the ever-developing scientific proof, the inevitable conclusion – by abortion we are killing human lives. We are eradicating defenseless, voiceless babies, mostly for convenience. The media, displaying stunning bias, studiously refuses to use the words "pro-life" in connection with reporting these issues. What a charade is going on here.

We need strong and brave people here in this legislature. This is a moment of conscience. This is not a go-along to get-along moment. This is not a time to be misled by the "need to compromise" approach to law-making (as important as that may be in other circumstances). No, this is a time to confidently vote against this abortion bill because it is not necessary in light of our existing federal and state laws. By doing so, you will not give up one iota of abortion rights as they exist today. You don't have to vote for

this. You will not be betraying anyone since there is no present threat to constitutionally protected abortion rights.

The anti-life agenda represented here by this unnecessary, overreaching legislative proposal should be firmly rejected. Abortion needs to be considered with both our minds and with our hearts. Deep down in our inner selves, we know that killing unborn babies is wrong. We, as a civilized people living in the most prosperous country in the history of the world, have to know that we can do better than allowing the widespread destruction of innocent human life. We were created for better than this. Let's wake up, change direction, let's not be afraid to stop the culture of death and to begin to build up the culture of life for ourselves, for our children, and for our future.



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