

No. 18-1019

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In the  
Supreme Court of the United States

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KRISTINA BOX, COMMISSIONER OF THE INDIANA  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, *ET AL.*,  
*Petitioners,*

v.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF INDIANA AND  
KENTUCKY, INC., *ET AL.*,  
*Respondents.*

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*On Petition for Writ of Certiorari  
to the United States Court of Appeals  
for the Seventh Circuit*

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**BRIEF OF *AMICI CURIAE* OPERATION OUTCRY  
WOMEN INJURED BY ABORTION, THE JUSTICE  
FOUNDATION, AND MELINDA THYBAULT,  
IN SUPPORT OF KRISTINA BOX,  
COMMISSIONER OF THE INDIANA STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, *ET AL.*,**

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**INTEREST OF *AMICI CURIAE*<sup>1</sup>**

*Amici* Operation Outcry “Women Hurt by Abortion”<sup>2</sup> are citizens of Indiana and other states. They have personally suffered the adverse physical, emotional, and psychological effects of abortion. *See* Appendix A.<sup>3</sup>

This Court has previously cited the Brief of Sandra Cano (the “Jane Doe” of *Doe v. Bolton*, 410 U.S. 179 (1973)) and 180 Women Hurt by Abortion for the proposition that “some women come to regret” their abortions:

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<sup>1</sup> Counsel for *Amici* authored the brief in whole. The Justice Foundation is supported through private contributions of donors who have made the preparation and submission of this brief possible. No party or counsel for any party made any financial contribution toward the preparation or submission of the brief. Counsel of record for the parties received timely notice of the intent to file this brief and emailed written consent to its filing.

<sup>2</sup> The identities of Operation Outcry Women Hurt by Abortion can be found in this DropBox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/rm63f2h5xvx8m63/Women%20Hurt%20By%20Abortion%20Across%20The%20United%20States.pdf?dl=0> Initials or first names are used to protect privacy.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix A contains excerpts from affidavits of Indiana women hurt by abortion. Both the trial court, and the Court of Appeals gave great weight to anecdotal evidence collected by Planned Parenthood from women allegedly affected by the Indiana statute. Pet. App. 26a. Equal if not more weight should be given to Women Hurt by Abortion, whose stories are more complete. The anecdotal evidence provided by PPINK are only snapshots in time. Some or all of the nine women who did not receive abortions at PPINK may be happy mothers now, grateful that the law mandated further steps before they could obtain an abortion.

"Respect for human life finds an ultimate expression in the bond of love the mother has for her child. . . . Whether to have an abortion requires a difficult and painful moral decision. . . . While we find no reliable data to measure the phenomenon, it seems unexceptionable to conclude some women come to regret their choice to abort the infant life they once created and sustained. **See Brief for Sandra Cano et al. as Amici Curiae** in No. 05-380, pp 22-24. Severe depression and loss of esteem can follow."

*Gonzalez v. Carhart*, 550 U.S. 124, 159 (2007) (citation omitted; emphasis added). This Court recognized the significance of the women's own testimonies and cited to the extensive quotes from post-abortive women.

*Amicus* The Justice Foundation is a non-profit organization created to protect the fundamental freedoms and rights essential to preserve American society. The Justice Foundation advocates for the protection of women's health, represents clients on a pro bono basis, litigates cases, and provides education. It serves at the forefront of protecting women from unsafe abortion practices and provides post-abortive women with a forum to share their abortion experiences. The Justice Foundation is currently assisting Melinda Thybault in circulating "The Moral Outcry Petition," which seeks to declare abortion a crime against humanity because of its injurious effect on women and their unborn children. The petition has



garnered over 161,000 signatures.<sup>4</sup>

*Amicus* Operation Outcry, a project of The Justice Foundation, has collected over 4600 legally admissible written testimonies of women hurt by abortion. These testimonies describe the devastating effects of abortion on women, chronicling a startling array of adverse consequences, including depression, anxiety, suicidal attempts and thoughts, promiscuity, anxiety, drug and alcohol abuse, addiction, and inability to bond with subsequent children. These pathologies lead to other adverse consequences, such as economic and social losses through inability to hold steady jobs and abusive relationships due to feelings of worthlessness.

In balancing the benefits and potential burdens of Indiana's ultrasound law, the voices of women who have come to regret their abortions because they were not provided with adequate information and time for reflection on that information have been disregarded. The lower courts dismissed out of hand studies demonstrating the harmful, often life-long, effects of abortion on women, opting only to consider selective studies provided by Planned Parenthood. *Amici* want their voices—the voices of women who did not have the benefit of a statute like Indiana's—to be heard. *Amici* seek to protect the right of women to be provided with ultrasound imaging, medically accurate information, and time to reflect on the

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<sup>4</sup> The Moral Outcry Petitions are available here: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/c4hvlwbsyucvkw/128%2C632%20The%20Moral%20Outcry%20Petition%20Names.pdf?dl=0>

decision to abort prior to undergoing the procedure.<sup>5</sup>

The best information regarding the consequences of not being adequately informed about abortion and not having time to digest that information comes from women who have experienced the procedure. Many told the Justice Foundation that they would not have chosen to abort—and would not be living with the regret that accompanied that choice—had provisions like those in Indiana’s ultrasound statute been in effect. Their perspective stands in contrast to that of the abortion industry, which has consistently challenged statutes requiring information about abortion in order to market its services.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> E.g., Virginia M.- “I was 20 weeks pregnant. I was given very little information about abortion. Planned Parenthood told me I was pregnant and then said we can take care of it for you and set up an appointment with a hospital for other indigents because I had very little money. They told me it was okay, it was just removing tissue. Everyone does it and it doesn't even hurt. I was never given an ultrasound and I was calculated to be 12 weeks along, but the doctors found out during the abortion that I was actually 20 weeks along and I almost died along with my baby the day I had my abortion. I was never informed of anything. They told me there would be no consequences at all. It would just magically take care of my problem. I wanted to kill myself. Everyone said it wasn't a baby.” Appendix A at 5a.

<sup>6</sup> Molly S. White, Former Texas State Representative: "When I asked the abortion clinic worker about the fetal development stage of my 9-week-old baby, she grabbed a pen and put a small dot on a piece of paper, looked at me and said, 'it's just a small mass of cells no bigger than this dot.' If I was offered an ultrasound I would've seen my baby had a tiny body, a beating heart, and moving about in my womb. That image would've convinced me that my child was already rapidly

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growing and I would've walked out of that clinic and given birth to my child. However, I was purposely lied to so I wouldn't leave and go through with the abortion. The abortion left me physically damaged and emotionally traumatized for decades. Ultrasounds save lives and protect women from the trauma of abortion."

Rebecca Porter: "I was never offered a sonogram for any of my three abortions. During my last abortion, the nurse said, 'Oh look twins' and then she smiled at me. I tried to end my life afterwards. I am certain that if I had been shown a sonogram before my first abortion, I would never have aborted any of my children and wouldn't have to live with the fact that I took the life of 4 of my children."

Nona Ellington: "I was told at Planned Parenthood (what an inaccurate name), that my baby was a blob of tissue. They also suggested abortion, since I was so young and still in school. I trusted them because they were nice enough to give me a free pregnancy test and free birth control pills (at another visit). Abortion hurts women and kills our future generations literally. For over 30 years, I have regretted my choice of abortion. I never became a parent as a result of the abortion. I have suffered excruciating physical and emotional pain also as a result. My experience is the same as millions of other women and their families. If I had seen a sonogram and heard the heartbeat of my baby, I would never had made the poor, fatal choice of abortion."

Dawn Jackson: "I have often thought about the impact having had an opportunity to view a sonogram would have had on my decision to abort my child. I know that it would definitely have made a huge difference and that my child would be alive today had I been given that opportunity. Unfortunately, that wasn't even an option in 1974, but it definitely is today. Although I was very young, had someone told me the truth and encouraged me to tell my parents and had I been shown my baby I feel certain the outcome would have been far different. Because of that decision I not only am missing a daughter, but feel sure I'm missing grandchildren. And as a grandmother now that absolutely breaks my heart yet again. Just as a bookmark I have states: Abortion stops one heart from beating and breaks the heart of another."

## SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

Indiana's ultrasound statute requires doctors to obtain meaningful informed consent with adequate time for patient reflection prior to performing a life-destroying, life-altering procedure.

Abortion is unique in that it is the only medical procedure performed for the sole purpose of destroying a living human being. Whether one calls this other entity a nascent life, a fetus, "infant life" (Gonzalez, *supra*), or an unborn child, the reality is that abortion is vastly different from other medical procedures, such as surgery to remove a tumor. A tumor does not have the potential to become a brain surgeon, a Supreme Court Justice, or, for that matter, an abortion provider.

Because of the gravity of the decision to terminate a pregnancy, it is not unreasonable for a state to provide comprehensive, medically-accurate information about the procedure *as well as a period of reflection* for a woman to contemplate the

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Myra Myers: "I had conceived and birthed 5 children before the Lie: 'It is not a baby yet'. Had I seen a sonogram before aborting the 6th conceived child, I would have known what my child really looked like, and never aborted!"

Theresa Bonopartis: "I suffered a coerced abortion as a teenager. At the time of my abortion, no one told me the development of my baby or anything about the procedure I was about to undergo. The result of that abortion caused me decades of suffering. I believe a woman has a right to see her baby in a sonogram and make her decision based on the truth, not on blind information and coercion. We deserve to know the development of our children through sonogram if we so choose."

decision before her to ensure truly informed consent. This is exactly what this Court held in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833, 885 (1990): “The idea that important decisions will be more informed and deliberate if they follow some period of reflection does not strike us as unreasonable, particularly where the statute directs that important information become part of the background of the decision.” Specifically in the context of abortion, this Court held that a 24-hour waiting period was “a reasonable measure to implement the State's interest in protecting the life of the unborn, a measure that does not amount to an undue burden.” *Id.*

The lower court here erred in elevating the static business model of an abortion provider to constitutional status, to the detriment of the state's interest as recognized in *Casey*.

## ARGUMENT

### I. WOMEN SHOULD BE GIVEN FULL ACCESS TO ULTRASOUND INFORMATION AND TIME TO REFLECT BEFORE MAKING AN ABORTION DECISION.

#### A. The Experiences of Post-Abortive Women Demonstrate that Abortion is Mentally, Emotionally, and Psychologically Harmful.

In *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, *supra*, this Court noted that “it cannot be questioned that

psychological wellbeing is a facet of health.” 505 U.S. at 882. This Court also stated there could be “devastating psychological consequences” if a woman’s decision was not fully informed based on “truthful, and not misleading” information *Id.*

The Fifth Circuit in *McCorvey v. Hill*, 385 F.3d 846 (5th Cir. 2004), cert. denied, held that the Rule 60(b) motion of Norma McCorvey, the real “Roe” of *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 133 (1973), seeking to re-open her case, was moot. Judge Edith Jones concurred but acknowledged that the evidence Ms. McCorvey presented in support of her motion “goes to the heart of the balance *Roe* struck between the choice of a mother and the life of her unborn child.” Judge Jones continued:

First, there are about a thousand affidavits of women who have had abortions and claim to have suffered long-term emotional damage and impaired relationships from their decision. Studies by scientists, offered by McCorvey, suggest that women may be affected emotionally and physically for years afterward and may be more prone to engage in high-risk, self-destructive conduct as a result of having had abortions. Second, *Roe*’s assumption that the decision to abort a baby will be made in close consultation with a woman’s private physician is called into question by affidavits from workers at abortion clinics, where most abortions are now performed. According to the affidavits, women are often herded through their

procedures with little or no medical or emotional counseling.

385 F.3d at 850-51. Some of the affidavits referenced by Judge Jones are included in Appendix A to this brief.

The Eighth Circuit has recently urged a re-evaluation of *Roe*, enumerating several reasons for this Court to reevaluate its abortion jurisprudence, including the adverse psychological effects on women:

The declarations from women who have had abortions also show that abortions may cause adverse consequences for the women's health and well-being. One woman reported that "[t]he negative effects of my abortion resulted in ten years of mental and emotional torment." . . . Another reported she "suffered for years from depression, anxiety, panic attacks, low self-esteem" and "suicidal ideation."

*MKB Management Corp., et al v. Wayne Stenehjem, et al*, 795 F.3d 768, 775 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2015).

**B. The Waiting Period Allows Reflection, Averts Trauma, and Is Crucial to Women's Mental Health.**

Many *Amici* Women Hurt by Abortion state that, when faced with the abortion decision, they were denied time for reflection in order to make an informed decision. Many report that they were in a

state of numbness, shock, fear, or panic when they learned they were pregnant. Linda S. describes it this way: " I was in such a state of shock because of the pregnancy. I don't believe I understood anything that was being said. All I knew is that I wanted a quick fix to the problem."<sup>7</sup> P.C. recalls: "I felt like I was rushed through the process, but there was a woman that talked to me about the procedure. I felt like I was in a mental fog and not really of the right mind to understand."<sup>8</sup> Research has shown that women considering abortion "indicated a preference for receiving as much or more information pertaining to complications...as other elective procedures."<sup>9</sup>

The need for a waiting period before making a major decision is well-recognized in other contexts in the law. Consumer protection laws exist across a wide spectrum of industries. For example, federal law provides for a three-day cooling off period during which buyers have the right to cancel certain purchases.<sup>10</sup> Indiana has a similar statute that specifically allows for a three-day right to cancel some contracts, including those made with time share brokers and health spas.<sup>11</sup> The rationale for such laws is that consumers may be so eager to purchase a product or service that they do not take the time to reflect on the purchase. In the case of

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix A at 32a.

<sup>8</sup> Appendix A at 16a-17a.

<sup>9</sup> P. Coleman, D. Reardon, M.B. Lee, *Women's preferences for information and complication seriousness ratings related to elective medical procedures*. *J Med Ethics* 32(8), 435-438 (2006).

<sup>10</sup> 16 C.F.R. § 429.0 et seq.

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Burns Ind. Code Ann. § 32-32-3-7 and § 24-5-7-5.



time share purchases, a period of contemplation is needed because the contract is binding in perpetuity. It could be argued that providing a cooling off period constitutes an undue burden of sorts for the seller, who must absorb the transaction costs of a cancelled sale. Yet the law demands that individuals have the right to fully contemplate the long-term implications of their decisions.

More to the point, most adoption codes provide for a waiting period or revocation period before the decision to surrender a child for adoption is final.<sup>12</sup>

Indiana's Ultrasound Law embodies a reasonable, unremarkable, and constitutional decision by the legislature to require truth and time to be given to the woman contemplating abortion, including time to reflect on what she has seen and learned in the ultrasound and in consultation with family and loved ones, rather than abortion clinic personnel.

## **II. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH SHOWS THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF WOMEN EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AFTER ABORTION.**

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<sup>12</sup> See Tex. Fam. Code § 161.035 (30 days). For all states see Adoption Network Law Center, <https://adoptionnetwork.com/adoption-process-for-birth-mothers>

**A. Other State Legislative Findings Also Point to Serious Physical, Emotional, and Psychological Harm to Women from Abortion.**

In 2003, the Texas Legislature passed the “Women’s Right to Know” Act. Texas Health & Safety Code §171.001 et seq. As a result, the medical board of the Texas Department of Health held hearings and, based on the information gathered in those hearings, produced a booklet entitled “A Woman’s Right to Know,” which, by law, is distributed to women who are thinking about having an abortion.

The pamphlet warns of the emotional aftermath of an abortion. It states:

Women report a range of emotions after an abortion. This can include depression or thoughts of suicide. Some women, after their abortion, have also reported feelings of grief, anxiety, lowered self-esteem, regret, sexual dysfunction, avoidance of emotional attachment, flashbacks and substance abuse. For some women, these emotions may appear immediately after an abortion or gradually over a longer period of time.

These feelings may recur or be felt more strongly at the time of another abortion, a normal birth or on the anniversary of the abortion.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> “A Women's Right to Know,” Texas Department of Health, (2016), pp. 8-9, available at <https://dshs.texas.gov/wrtk/>

A number of state legislatures have also conducted hearings on the actual practice and consequences of abortion. A notable example is South Dakota which created the South Dakota Task Force to Study Abortion [hereafter “Task Force”].<sup>14</sup> The Task Force studied ten aspects of abortion including its physical and mental effects on women.

Specifically, “[t]he Task Force heard live testimony of approximately fifty-five witnesses, including thirty-two experts, and considered the written reports and testimony from another fifteen experts.”<sup>15</sup> The live testimony **“was divided almost equally between witnesses who support the position that abortion is harmful to women and should be illegal and those who think it should be legal.”**<sup>16</sup> The Task Force also received approximately 3500 pages of written materials.<sup>17</sup> Of particular significance were the affidavits of almost 2000 women from across the country who provided statements about their abortion experiences.<sup>18</sup> Some of the *Amici* were part of that process. After hearing the evidence from experts and post-abortive women, the Task Force stated:

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[default.shtm](#).

<sup>14</sup> Report of the South Dakota Task Force to Study Abortion (December 2005), pp. 42-43, available at <http://www.dakotavoices.com/Docs/South%20Dakota%20Abortion%20Task%20Force%20Report.pdf>. (emphasis added).

<sup>15</sup> *Id.* at 6.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.* at 6-7 (emphasis added)

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 7.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

Further, the Task Force finds that **the pre-abortion counseling provided often does not prepare women who have abortions for the psychological outcomes** they may experience after their abortions. ... **Due to the very limited information disclosed by abortion providers, women are not fully aware that abortion carries with it the potential to damage their physical, emotional, interpersonal, and spiritual well-being.**<sup>19</sup>

The Task Force found the following mental health outcomes:

1. “Based on methodological improvements characterizing these studies, **prior works indicating that abortion is an emotionally benign medical procedure for most women are invalid and little reliance can be placed upon them; . . .**
3. “Women with a history of induced abortion are at a significantly higher risk for the following problems: a) inpatient and outpatient psychiatric claims, particularly adjustment disorders, bipolar disorder, depressive psychosis, neurotic depression, and schizophrenia; b) substance use generally, and specifically during a subsequent

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<sup>19</sup> *Id.* at 47 (emphasis added).

pregnancy; and c) clinically significant levels of depression, anxiety, and parenting difficulties ...”<sup>20</sup>

The findings of these legislative bodies are amply supported by peer-reviewed research, as discussed in the following section. *Amici* support the State's efforts to protect their citizens from the abortion industry misleading and exploiting women in crisis.

**B. A Large Body of Peer-Reviewed Research Demonstrates a Causal Link Between Abortion and Clinical Mental Health Problems.**

Dr. David Reardon, a leading expert on the effects of abortion on women, documents that while women may experience temporary feelings of relief after abortion, this is often followed by guilt and remorse, nervous disorders, sleep disturbances, sexual dysfunction, depression, loss of self-esteem, self-destructive behavior such as suicide, thoughts of suicide, and alcohol and drug abuse, chronic problems with relationships, dramatic personality changes, anxiety attacks, difficulty grieving, increased tendency toward violence, chronic crying, difficulty concentrating, flashbacks, and difficulty in bonding with later children.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Id. at 42-43 (emphasis added)

<sup>21</sup> “Abortion Risks, Abortion Complications, Abortion Dangers, Abortion Side Effects,” <http://afterabortion.org/2012/abortion-risks-abortion-complications-abortion-dangers-abortion-side-effects/>

The declarations submitted by *Amici* Women Hurt by Abortion support the findings of Dr. Reardon and other researchers. When *Amici* were asked “How has abortion affected you?” their responses included depression,<sup>22</sup> suicidal thoughts,<sup>23</sup> bonding issues,<sup>24</sup> alcohol and/or drug use,<sup>25</sup> promiscuity,<sup>26</sup> guilt,<sup>27</sup> and anger.<sup>28</sup> Many

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<sup>22</sup> Amy W. – “I was not told anything. ...I have been diagnosed with PTSD. ... thoughts of committing suicide. I'd ask them, ‘Are there counselors and psychiatrists involved in this?’ ” Appendix A at 7a.

Kim B. – “... [I]n no way was I told of any emotional complications nor did I ever speak with a counselor or medical staff about alternatives. ... I was 15 years old... I know this great evil will affect me for the rest of my life. ... No one can adequately prepare a woman for the emotional consequences of abortion.” *Id.* at 8a.

<sup>23</sup> Leandra – “I was told it was simple procedure, with a little discomfort. It wasn't simple and there was a lot of pain and no compassion. I experienced severe depression afterwards. I became suicidal. I had a hard time forgiving myself for what I had done. I wished I was stronger and better informed.” *Id.* at 8a.

<sup>24</sup> Aimee G. – “The abortion was only referred to as ‘the procedure’ from the second I first contacted Planned Parenthood where my abortion was ultimately performed. No one told me that I'd possibly suffer any of the emotional, spiritual, or physical side effects either short term or long term. I personally experienced all 3 for the duration of my life. ... Suicidal tendencies for at least one year after my abortion. At the time of my abortion, I was unable to appropriately parent my previously born son and now 14 years later, I still feel inadequate and not worthy to parent any of my 4 children.” *Id.* at 9a-10a.

<sup>25</sup> Krista – “I just remember them giving me some pamphlets to read while I waited. They said that having an abortion was safer for the mother than carrying the baby to term and delivering. The abortion sent me into a downward spiral of depression. Life had absolutely no meaning whatsoever. I felt

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completely dead inside. I was very self-destructive in my actions." *Id.* at 8a-9a.

<sup>26</sup> Cathy – "I was given no choice or educated on this matter, absolutely no teaching was done. I was angry and then depressed for several years. I became more sexually active because, who cares?" *Id.* at 33a.

Heidi W. – "I was never told anything about what would happen. I didn't realize I was really aborting a child until I saw bloody stuff go out of me into a large jar. It was then I realized I had just killed a child. No one told me. I was not told that I could have massive bleeding, depression, suicidal tendencies or any promiscuity or drug increases after the abortion. ... I became more suicidal." *Id.* at 9a.

<sup>27</sup> Aimee G. – "The procedure was not explained in detail. The lady told me that the doctor would "remove the fetus to terminate the pregnancy. No follow-up info was handed out to me. NO one said there could be possibilities of complications of any sort, nor what I should do if any complication occurred. Physical: damaged uterus that led to serious complications in 2 subsequent pregnancies and deliveries. Emotional: resentment that I was reduced to "a number" in a series of production-line style procedures in an open room separated only by cloth dividers (I even recall the doctor discussing his happy family vacation as he tore part of my family from my belly.) immediate feelings of regret (NOT relief) that continue to present; suicidal tendencies directly related to abortion; immediate insomnia and night terrors during any periods of sleep (several year duration); further engaged in self-destructive behaviors (drinking, dangerous activities, etc.) for many years following abortion; ZERO self-worth associated with guilt and inadequacies as parent of previously born son, bouts of serious depression and anxiety directly associated with abortion. Spiritual: permanent hopeless feeling of NEVER EVER having a chance of forgiveness." *Id.* at 9a-10a.

<sup>28</sup> Rebekah C. – "I was told that my baby was just a mass of cells, not that his heart had begun to beat or that his fingers and toes started to appear. I knew there was an immediate danger of bleeding, but I did not know that there could be consequences, such as an increased risk of breast cancer, later in my life. Sometimes a woman who has an abortion is like a

reveal that the “choice” to abort was made without accurate or adequate information.<sup>29</sup> Many of the women experience life-long emotional and psychological consequences.<sup>30</sup> Abortion was presented to them as a quick fix without any short- or long-term negative consequences.

The lower courts wholly accepted PPINK’s claims that the research of Dr. Priscilla Coleman presented by the State to demonstrate the negative

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wolf who chews its leg off to get out of trap. It just doesn't know another way.” *Id.* at 10a-11a.

<sup>29</sup> Stacy W. – “I was told that at this age (8 weeks), “it” (the fetus) isn't a baby at all, ‘It doesn't even look like a baby,’ I was 18 yrs. old at the time. They didn't show me a picture of the fetus at 8 weeks, so I could see for myself. Instead, I was told they were going to ‘scrape down’ my uterine walls which were ‘building up in preparation for a baby,’ but right now it was just a bunch of cells dividing. And that once they scraped down the walls of the uterus, then the baby couldn't come, in essence, they would simply be preventing the possibility of the baby to happen at all. That it wouldn't be able to ‘implant.’ What a LIE! There was no counseling, afterward, I was sent into a room with other women to sit and whoever I had brought with me to the Planned Parenthood that day (my boyfriend at the time) met me in there, where I cried profusely for about half an hour before leaving.” *Id.* at 11a.

<sup>30</sup> Christine H. – “Nothing was explained to me about the emotional or physical impact of the abortion. It's been a mental and emotional torture every day. It has caused me to spiral into depression, low self-esteem, and avoidance of living life to its fullest.” *Id.* at 11a-12a.

Teresa – “No. I know it wasn't a “blob” like my parents said. You will NEVER recover from it psychologically. Nobody takes into account, nor is a woman told, how abortion will affect her psychologically for many years, perhaps her whole life. All women considering abortion should be required to talk to a counselor to make sure she has considered these things.” *Id.* at 12a.



mental health consequences of abortion is “controversial and much-maligned,” and that Coleman’s studies have been “nearly uniformly rejected by other experts in the field.”<sup>31</sup> The lower courts relied heavily on the American Psychological Association’s (APA) 2008 “Report of the Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion”<sup>32</sup> to discredit Coleman’s work and numerous other studies that have consistently found a causal link between abortion and such negative consequences as mental health problems, lower self-esteem, and increased risk of violent death.

Notably, the APA’s Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion did not conduct its own peer-reviewed studies; it merely disparaged existing studies that did find a causal link between abortion and negative mental health effects. Moreover, the report was rife with the Task Force’s own assumptions, including the belief that women suffer adverse effects from abortion because of the alleged stigma stemming from their personal values.<sup>33</sup>

For example, the Task Force concluded that “for women of color, moral and religious values intersect with identities conferred by race, class, or ethnicity to influence women’s likelihood of obtaining an abortion and, potentially, their

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<sup>31</sup> *Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky v. Commissioner of the Indiana State Department of Health, et al* (2018), at 32 and 41.

<sup>32</sup> Report of the Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion (2008), available at <https://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/abortion/mental-health.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> *Id.* at 15.

psychological experiences following it.”<sup>34</sup> Negative consequences of abortion were viewed as a product of a woman’s “deeply held religious, spiritual, or cultural beliefs” rather than the abortion procedure itself.<sup>35</sup>

According to the APA, the negative effects of abortion can be alleviated through messaging that impels women “to cognitively reappraise an abortion in a more positive or benign way.”<sup>36</sup> The APA acknowledges that variables used in reanalyzing existing data “reflect the interests (and sometimes the biases) of the researcher doing the reanalysis.”<sup>37</sup> Yet here the Task Force lays bare its own bias, namely that abortion should be viewed as a positive or at least a benign experience. This bias denigrates the most deeply held beliefs of countless women like *Amici* about pregnancy and abortion and casts significant doubt on the validity of the APA’s report.

The 2016 analysis of Dr. D. Paul Sullins, using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health, supports Dr. Coleman’s findings of a causal link between abortion and subsequent mental health problems.<sup>38</sup> The longitudinal study from which Dr. Sullins extracted his data was funded by 18 federal agencies,

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<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.* at 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Id.* at 12.

<sup>37</sup> *Id.* at 56.

<sup>38</sup> D. Paul Sullins, *Abortion, substance abuse and mental health in early adulthood: Thirteen-year longitudinal evidence from the United States*, SAGE Open Medicine, Vol 4: 1-11, (2016), available at [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5066584/pdf/10.1177\\_2050312116665997.pdf](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5066584/pdf/10.1177_2050312116665997.pdf)

including the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The quality of the dataset is remarkable, as 81% of the participants remained in the study from adolescence through young adulthood. Dr. Sullins followed a representative national sample of 8,005 cases over thirteen years.<sup>39</sup>

After adjusting for all known confounding factors, including pregnancy outcomes and sociodemographic differences, Dr. Sullins' meta-analysis reveals an elevated risk of mental disorders, including depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, and substance abuse following abortion. "Exposure to induced abortion was consistently associated with increased rate of most mental disorders, with ORs [odds ratios] ranging from 1.02 to 2.83. This trend is summarized in the fact that women exposed to abortion from ages 15 to 29 (on average) experienced overall rates of mental health problems 1.34 (95% CI 1.22-1.47) times higher than those not exposed to abortion."<sup>40</sup>

Dr. Sullins found that 32% of women under the age of 20 experienced mental health disorders associated with abortion.<sup>41</sup> Dr. Sullins' research "offers some of the strongest evidence to date that the association of abortion with subsequent mental distress is not merely contingent but is indeed causal."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>40</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>41</sup> *Id.* at 8.

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

*Amici* do not claim that all women suffer from abortion. However, they represent a significant number of women for whom the mental, emotion, and psychological distress of abortion is a reality. Dr. Sullins' research validates other similar longitudinal studies that have come to the same conclusion, namely that "The overall level of distress, accounting for about a tenth of mental disorders for women in their late twenties, may be characterized as moderate, but it is not trivial. Ideological claims that all abortions are psychologically devastating, or that abortion has no ill effect on mental health, are both inconsistent with these findings."<sup>43</sup>

**III. INDIANA MAY REQUIRE COMPLIANCE WITH REASONABLE REGULATIONS ON ABORTION PROVIDERS DESIGNED TO ENSURE FULLY INFORMED DECISIONS.**

It is well-recognized that public health, safety, morals, and general welfare are the proper domain of state legislative action. In the instant case, the lower courts showed remarkable deference to a single business's alleged difficulties complying with a law designed to protect the short and long-term mental health of thousands of Indiana women each year. The courts used the Constitution as a means to protect that business's bottom line under the guise of protecting the right to abortion.

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<sup>43</sup> *Id.* at 9.

After the Ultrasound Law was passed in 2016, PPINK, virtually the only provider of abortions in Indiana, made a business decision that it would not use any of its \$17 million budget to purchase ultrasound machines, even portable machines that cost less than \$5000, for any of its facilities that do not provide abortions. Just one-half of one percent of that budget could have purchased two new ultrasound machines, or ten portable ones, with funds left over for extra staff time for operating the machines. Just two machines could have been placed in those of PPINK's centers where they would most effectively reduce travel times of hundreds of women for their informed consent and ultrasound appointments in the first year alone. The one-time expenditures would be amortized over several years, meaning another quarter of one percent in subsequent three or four years could be used to purchase more machines, hire or train more staff to operate them, or both.

From fiscal year 2016 to fiscal year 2018, PPINK's annual revenue increased from \$16 million to \$19 million, largely due to an influx of donations and grant funding.<sup>44</sup> During the same time period, the number of unique patient visits decreased by nearly 5000 and the total number of

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<sup>44</sup> PPINK's annual revenue increased from 16,129,516 to 19,068,306 from FY 2016 to FY 2018. See PPINK 2016 Annual Report, available at <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-indiana-kentucky/about/annual-report> and PPINK 2018 Annual report, available at [https://issuu.com/kelseymckim8/docs/lo\\_res\\_002\\_ppink\\_ar18?e=27317331/65883004](https://issuu.com/kelseymckim8/docs/lo_res_002_ppink_ar18?e=27317331/65883004). Last accessed March 2, 2019.

visits decreased by over 40,000—a 65% reduction.<sup>45</sup> The number of women served decreased by over 5000 in that two-year span.<sup>46</sup> Clearly PPINK is willing to make business decisions that drastically alter its ability to serve women. The one change PPINK was not willing to make was to invest a fraction of its revenue to provide a reasonable period of time—just eighteen hours—for a woman to contemplate one of the most serious decisions she will make in her lifetime.

By permanently enjoining enforcement of the Indiana law, the courts froze the status quo for pre-abortion counseling services, putting women at risk for making decisions with life-long negative consequences without adequate time for reflection.

## CONCLUSION

The Indiana Ultrasound Statute merely does what federal and state laws already do—provide a cooling-off period during which, equipped with all relevant information, individuals can consider whether they are making a sound decision. This Court has affirmed that states have an interest in unborn life—a statement that is meaningless if a state cannot actually enact provisions that allow women to receive the full scope of information about the abortion procedure along with sufficient time to absorb that information. This Court should grant certiorari.

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<sup>45</sup> Unduplicated patient visits decreased from 51,127 to 46,176. Total patients served decreased from 116,955 to 75,375. See 2016 and 2018 Annual Reports, *supra*, n. 44.

<sup>46</sup> Number of women served decreased from 46,259 to 40,861.

Respectfully submitted,

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March 6, 2019

## **APPENDIX**



**APPENDIX A: Excerpts from Affidavits of  
*Amici* Indiana Women Hurt By Abortion**

**Ruth O.**

"In 1985, I noticed symptoms that would have made me think that I might be pregnant. ... As I sat in the counseling room at that clinic, I was told that this was not murder. That I was not far enough along for the tissue in me to become a true "fetus" yet.

I was encouraged to write down all the reasons that an abortion would be the best alternative for me. ... I didn't know who the father was for sure. However I thought he was probably the one on drugs that I wanted nothing more to do with. If so, the child would probably be born deformed. I wouldn't make a good mother. How could I afford a child, daycare? How would I find care for a child with the hours I worked as a nurse? The child didn't stand a chance of a happy life. He or she would probably end up as unhappy as I was. Surely his life wouldn't be any better than mine. Why bring a child into a world where so much misery abounded. A child would be inconvenient - it might ruin my chances of getting the rehab job I was seeking. A child would ruin my life. What would people think of me being pregnant and unmarried? No one would ever have to know that I was ever pregnant, especially since I had signed in with an alias.

Then the lady took the paper from me, drew a line down the middle and wrote three things down:

Possibility of bleeding, possibility of infection, possibility of missing a day or two of work.

I was hesitant. But on the sheet of paper the pro-abortion side was definitely more weighted down. The lady that was with me asked me if I had eaten yet that morning and when I said no, she said, well, then we can take care of this for you right now. We have room for you on the schedule. She pulled out a stack of papers from the drawer and handed them to me to sign. When I said I wasn't sure, she told me that I was probably 8 to 9 weeks along and really couldn't afford to wait to make a decision. Besides, there was an ATM right in the building and I could get the money out of the bank and pay cash or I could just write them a check. There would be no record of what I had done because I had signed in as an alias. No time like the present. So, I agreed to the abortion.

I sat in her office for just a few minutes before they escorted me to what was referred to as the treatment room. I was the only one there. I must have come earlier than all the other scheduled cases. I was placed in a hospital gown. My legs placed up in stirrups. The doctor came in and said, "OK, we are ready to start, I am going to just put this tube in you and clean that mess out. You might feel a little discomfort." I started to protest. I started to stop him. He said, "We have a full day today, and we are working you in ahead of everyone else. Make up your mind." So I shut up. He inserted the tube, turned on the machine which did sound like a vacuum cleaner, and I experienced the most

intense pain in my abdomen. I remember screaming out for him to stop. Of course, it was too late. He calmly said, "It's almost over." Within a few minutes he was done. My legs were helped out of the stirrups and I heard him tell the nurse that if I had no significant bleeding, I could leave in a couple of hours.

As I lay there, separated only by curtains from other women that were being escorted in, I listened to their screams and the sound of that vacuum over and over again that morning. I realize that there could not have been more than 5 or 6 beds in that clinic, but the sounds of those women and the sounds of that machine have haunted me ever since. I can hardly stand the sound of a vacuum cleaner or the whine of construction equipment to this day!

That night as I suffered excruciated cramping and moderate bleeding, I wondered if I would bleed to death. I realized that I had killed a baby at that point. I knew without a doubt what I had done was wrong, and that knowledge and guilt and shame of what I had done followed me ever since.

I have spent the last we years of my life regretting that fateful day when I wanted to get a free confirmation of the pregnancy that I suspected. I realize that the decision was mine to make and I could have said no, **but I do also think that had I been given more time to think about what I was doing, and not given time pressures, my decision may have been different.** (emphasis

added)

I do know the outcome of that day has affected the rest of my life. For one, I quit dating for the next few years. I did not have sex again until I started dating the man that is now my husband, and I have never, ever received any pleasure from sex since then. I cannot enjoy the act of sex.

I have nightmares about the abortion procedure, about the child that I aborted and about the father of that child coming after me. I have two beautiful children now, and as I love them, yet I often mourn for the child that never was. I fight depression and tears on a regular basis. I have fought anger and bitterness, **I have uncontrolled flare ups of anger that come without warning, and I lost my job last year due to that.** I have lived with guilt and shame. (emphasis added)

**Until recently, I never told anyone about the abortion. It was this deep, dark secret that I could not share with anyone.** So, I never made an effort to get to know people, because I was always afraid that I would be found out. I have felt unworthy to be befriended by anyone because of my shame. (emphasis added.)

The decision to marry my husband was very much based on the fact that I knew that he had paid for a previous girlfriend to have an abortion, and so, I felt he could never hold it against me. And the worst thing of all is that I have spent the last 23 years fearing the wrath of God!

Obviously, I could not have all these repercussions from that one fateful experience in my life without it affecting those around me. My children have had to walk on eggshells at times not knowing whether this would be the time Mom would flare up in anger, or cope with a simple situation. My husband has had to deal with my being emotional removed from him, never really loving him, and honestly, faking the enjoyment of sex with him. He has had to deal with a marriage where sex is avoided. My co-workers, too, have had to deal with my episodes of anger.

Thus, based on my experiences as what I would call a victim of abortion, I would never recommend that any woman, anywhere have an abortion. The long term effects of abortion in my life are a testimony that not only is abortion an atrocity to the child, but it is a long term threat to the health and well-being of the mother. I am living proof of the long term emotional ill-effects of abortion on women."

**Virginia M.**

20 weeks pregnant. "I was given very little information about abortion. Planned Parenthood told me I was pregnant and then we can take care of it for you and set up an appointment with a hospital for indigents because I had very little money. They told me it was okay, it was just removing tissue, everyone does it, and it doesn't even hurt. **I was never given an ultrasound and I was calculated to be about 12 weeks**

**along but the doctors found out during the abortion that I was actually 20 weeks along and I almost died along with my baby the day I had my abortion. I was never informed of anything.** They told me there would be no consequences at all. It would just magically take care of my problem. **I wanted to kill myself.** I didn't see the point of going on living when I missed my baby so much, but **everyone said it wasn't a baby so it was hard to figure out why I was feeling so empty.**" (emphasis added)

**Arlene L.**

"I knew it would terminate the pregnancy but I did not know (especially with my first one) that this was a baby with a heartbeat and brain waves; not a blob of tissue. I was also not informed of the physical damage to my body. It has changed my life forever because my second one resulted in having a hysterectomy due to a very complicated pregnancy. To this day I have never married so now I have no help. Even if I would have married, I obviously would not have been able to bear my own children. I have lost out on a second generation."

**C.K.**

"I was 22 weeks. They said since I already had children that I had a basic understanding. They never told me I could die. It was the scariest thing that ever happened to me or my husband. I'm not exaggerating when I say I am lucky to be alive. I went in for the procedure which was a total of three

visits to the clinic. ... I started to fall asleep and one of the nurses came over and gave me a shot of antibiotics after that I remember saying something's very wrong and I passed out. When I woke up I was completely hallucinating. On the ambulance ride over I was hysterical. I kept asking them am I going to die. ... my blood pressure was so low that I passed out, I had a fever of 106 and I was having organ failure, my body was in shock I had severe sepsis. I was in the hospital for 6 days but the doctors couldn't believe I was doing so well. In fact, several of them told me that I was lucky to be alive. Most people who are in that bad of shape are in the hospital for weeks, even months, and that 6 out of 10 people with the same illness die. I know for a fact that abortion clinics and actual doctors do not follow the law. The doctor that performed my abortion actually falsified the date on my paperwork. In Ohio, you have to wait 24 hours after receiving information from the doctor, he said you're an adult you know what you want to do and if we change the dates you can get started today. After only being in his office for less than 1 hour, he broke the law plain and simple."

**Amy W.**

"I was not told anything. I just went into the abortion clinic, my husband at the time paid the money to the abortionist. Then, I went in and had the abortion. ... I've previously had thoughts of committing suicide. ... Abortion is killing a human life, scientific facts are being made known that backs this up, and killing is murder. Murder is

illegal and therefore, abortion should be illegal."

**Kim B.**

"I remember being told I would be given a shot and then a lot of medical terminology that ended with suction. But in no way was I told of any emotional complications nor did I ever speak with a counselor or medical staff about alternatives. ... **I felt like my soul was crying out during the procedure. ... I know this great evil will affect me for the rest of my life. ... No one can adequately prepare a woman for the emotional consequences of abortion.**" (emphasis added)

**Leandra**

"I was told it was a simple procedure with little discomfort. It wasn't simple and there was a lot of pain, and no compassion. **I experienced severe depression afterwards. I became suicidal.** I had a hard time forgiving myself for what I had done. **I wished I was stronger and better informed.** ... depression, suicidal, anger, unforgiveness of myself and those involved in my decision." (emphasis added)

**Krista**

"They said having an abortion was safer for the mother than carrying the baby to term and delivering the baby. It sent me into a downward spiral of depression. Life had absolutely no meaning whatsoever. **I felt completely dead**



**inside. I was very self-destructive in my actions.**" (emphasis added)

**Heidi W.**

"I was never told anything about what would happen. **I didn't realize I was really aborting a child until I saw bloody stuff go out of me into a large jar.** It was then I realized I had just killed a child. No one told me. It was the worst decision I ever made. I never was able to forgive myself, my promiscuity and drug activities increased after the abortion and I became more suicidal." (emphasis added)

**Aimee G.**

"Literally, the only "counseling" I received was this: "Have you ever considered adoption?" and "Is this information [on the intake] correct?" The abortion was only referred to as "the procedure" from the second I first contacted Planned Parenthood where my abortion was ultimately performed. No one told me that I'd possibly suffer any of the emotional, spiritual or physical side effects either short term or long term. I personally experienced all 3 for the duration of my life. ... **Suicidal tendencies for at least one year after my abortion. At the time of my abortion, I was unable to appropriately parent my previously born son and now 14 years later, I still feel inadequate and worthy to parent any of my 4 children.**" The procedure was not explained in detail. The lady told me that the doctor would "remove the fetus to terminate the

pregnancy. No follow-up info was handed out to me. NO one said there could be possibilities of complications of any sort, nor what I should do if any complication occurred. Physical: damaged uterus that led to serious complications in 2 subsequent pregnancies and deliveries. Emotional: resentment that I was reduced to "a number" in a series of production-line style procedures in an open room separated only by cloth dividers (I even recall the doctor discussing his happy family vacation as he tore part of my family from my belly.) immediate feelings of regret (NOT relief) that continue to present; suicidal tendencies directly related to abortion; immediate insomnia and night terrors during any periods of sleep (several year duration); further engaged in self-destructive behaviors (drinking, dangerous activities, etc.) for many years following abortion; ZERO self-worth associated with guilt and inadequacies as parent of previously born son, bouts of serious depression and anxiety directly associated with abortion. Spiritual: permanent hopeless feeling of NEVER EVER having a chance of forgiveness. (emphasis added)

### **Rebekah C.**

**"I was told that my baby was just a mass of cells, not that his heart had begun to beat or that his fingers and toes had started to appear.** I would ask a woman considering abortion to consider the long term effects of her decision. Sometimes a woman who has an abortion is like a wolf who chews its leg off to get out of a trap. It just

doesn't know another way. **I would take her to a crisis pregnancy center and try to get help for her, including an ultrasound.** I would tell her that an abortion is never really gone from your mind. It's just something you learn to live with." (emphasis added)

**Stacy W.**

**"I was told at this stage (8 weeks), "it" (the fetus) isn't a baby at all, "it doesn't look like a baby."** I was 18 years old at the time. **They didn't show me a picture of the fetus at 8 weeks, so I could see for myself.** ... Instead, they told me they were just going to "scrape down" my uterine walls which were "building up in preparation for a baby," but right now it was just a bunch of cells dividing. In essence, they would simply be preventing the possibility of the baby to happen at all. **There was no counseling** ... I was sent into a room .... I had brought with me to the Planned Parenthood that day (my boyfriend at the time)... **Planned Parenthood pressured me. I had doubts, but they convinced me.**" (emphasis added)

**Christine H.**

"I was counseled by a woman who looked 20 years old. Nothing was explained to me about the emotional or physical impact of the abortion. It's been a mental and emotional torture every day. It has caused me to spiral into a depression, low self-esteem, and avoidance of living life to its fullest. I

wish I had the courage to seek help, seek education, and seek spiritual guidance before making a life altering decision of abortion."

**Teresa**

"I was not adequately informed... I was five months. I know it wasn't a "blob" like my parents said. All women considering abortion should be required to talk to a counselor to make sure she has considered these things."

**Ronda St.**

**"I was told it was not a baby, it was merely a fetus.** When I called Planned Parenthood to find out information about abortion, they told me on the phone it was a quick and safe procedure, and where the nearest clinic was at the time. The woman I talked to was so nice on the phone. She reassured me that at the early stage of pregnancy I was in, it was a fetus, not a baby yet. My mother and I were never able to speak about it afterwards ... She passed away five years ago today in my home and we were never able to undo the regret that hung between us. My kids would walk into a room and see me crying over what someone on the TV was sharing about abortion and I would cover it up with being passionate about the subject." (emphasis added)

**Marsha Y.**

"I was 24 weeks. I was not told about the slow painful death that would occur for my baby. I was not told that I would go into labor to actually deliver my aborted baby. I was not asked about my religious convictions about aborting my baby. I wasn't asked if I had any spiritual qualms about abortion. I had pernicious anemia resulting from the abortion. I was very ill and lost a lot of blood due to hemorrhaging and had to have a D&C. **I didn't know anything about human development and regret my decision.**" (emphasis added)

**Leslie K.**

"I was 17 weeks. All I knew at the time was that if I didn't have it done, my mother would have left me there. **Unless they've been there, nobody can adequately explain what happens after an abortion.** 30 years ago I don't think they had a full picture even then of the devastation I, and others like me, have had to endure. **I have actively tried to commit suicide 3 times.** I have given birth 4 times and have not been an effective parent to any of them. I have been on 3 different anti-depressants. **I purposely married a man who abused me because I deserve it. I am presently divorced.**" (emphasis added)

**Rhonda S.**

"No one really explained anything to me at all. I wanted to have the baby, but the doctor advised me to abort because I got measles in the first trimester

and he said the baby would have multiple defects. He said he had never seen one born without some sort of defect when the mother got measles. It has caused me great shame. I can't and don't talk to anyone about it. I have been taking an anti-depressant and I believe it is because of what I had done."

**R.M.**

"They didn't tell me anything about emotional consequences of an abortion or any other consequences."

**Linda C.**

"Nothing was explained to me. I ended up in the hospital afterwards with complications (high fever indicating an internal infection). This was not explained as a risk. Nothing was said to me regarding my own emotional state for the rest of my life if I killed my children;"

**Joyce H.**

"They didn't explain anything to me, how it was performed or what they would be doing. It has been 24 years and I still wonder what that child would be like had I decided to go ahead with the pregnancy."

**Shannon H.**

"The reality is they don't tell you. IT HURTS EMOTIONALLY, PHYSICALLY, SPIRITUALLY AND MENTALLY. You live with the ramifications of your decision the rest of your life. You will think you are never good enough for the love of anyone, man, child or God."

**Bonita**

"No one explained the procedure to me, nor what was to be done to the baby during or after. It was as if it was just a matter of pulling a tooth. They didn't have a counselor available before or after to explain the emotional pain and guilt that would come from having an abortion. **It wasn't until 5 years later that I saw a program on television that showed what had happened and then seeing it devastated me and the guilt was worse, because if I had known what was to be done, I wouldn't have gone through with it.** They didn't inform me the dangers if the doctor made a mistake, left tissue inside, perforated anything, or if I was bumped or jarred for 24 hours. I ended up hemorrhaging, because the doctor messed up, and was rushed by ambulance to the emergency room, close to death because of loss of blood. The doctor showed no remorse, calling it just an accident. I was the one left to carry all the guilt, pain and consequences alone." (emphasis added)

**Holly M.**

"I was never informed as to the nature of the abortion. I was never told of the emotional effects that I would go through. I have had several affects from the abortion. Some of them include emotional, **drug abuse**, and possibly infertility. I **have [had] to have counseling several times** and I am now clean from the drugs." (emphasis added)

### **Shanna**

"My experience with abortion has haunted me from that day to the present. The most vivid memory I had referring to the procedure was that I squeezed my legs together during the procedure to the horror of all in the procedure room. I didn't want what was happening but I felt I had no power to stop it."

### **A.A.**

"It was an awful nightmare. A secret that none of my friends are aware of for fear that they would think less of me for doing so. **I started drinking heavily afterwards** to deal with all the pain that I had inside. The emptiness that I felt, the guilt, the same... it still haunts me at times." (emphasis added)

### **P.C.**

"**I felt like I was rushed through the process, but there was a woman that talked to me about the procedure. I felt like I was in a mental fog and not really of the right mind to understand.** Anyway a week later I hemorrhaged



and was so infected that I was put in the hospital for intravenous antibiotics and later had to have a hysterectomy. I suffered with anxiety and depression and was suicidal." (emphasis added)

**Eve J.**

"I was 22 weeks. It was a three day outpatient procedure. **After all the research I've currently done, I would say I was not adequately informed of the nature of abortion.** I really can't remember them telling me much of anything except for brief medical things. I know they didn't tell what was going to happen. **I did not know how they performed abortions after 12 weeks. Had I have known, I would just had given the baby up for adoption or something else.** I had no idea it was even called a partial birth abortion. I feel even more terrible because I had a partial birth abortion. I feel stupid because I had no idea I was having a partial birth abortion. Loss of grief, resentment, anger toward self, deep yearning to be with my child. I feel like a murder." (emphasis added)

**Andrea**

"All they did was set up an appointment time. I arrived and they took me to get ready. Then when it was time, they called my name and performed the horrific procedure. Then sent me home. After the killing of my baby I had no idea of how devastated I would feel. I sat and sobbed for hours. I had nightmares and terrible visions. I cried out to

God to help me because I thought I was losing my mind. God answered my cries, but even now 26 years later, I feel the loss deep in my soul. ...I have been left with some female physical problems also."

**Fran**

"There was no organization at that time with women coming forward helping others and those giving the abortion didn't care. This is the largest regret of my life. You constantly wonder about the child that never was. What they would have been like. How they would have contributed to society and the love all have missed because they are not here."

**Janet G.**

"None of the medical professionals seemed to be concerned with the life of the baby, nor did they address my emotional state about the circumstances other than the standard doctor/patient issues concerning discomfort, etc."

**B.R.**

"I really don't remember much information being given about either the nature or the consequences."

**Iris W.**

"They made it seem like it was a no big deal thing. **They had videos of women claiming it was a great decision, one they didn't regret.** I

suffered deep depression and still regret the decision I made. I was so hurt by the whole ordeal. I broke it off with my fiancé. I felt angry toward him and all my friends for not talking me out of it." (emphasis added)

**L.S.T.**

"No information was given."

**Brandi**

"Needed to know more information."

**Lisa**

"I didn't fully recognize the incredible guilt and shame I would feel **and was convinced it was just a glob of cells**. I convinced myself that what I was doing was right and it wasn't a real baby. I also was told it was unable to feel anything. It has changed my life forever. I know that I literally murdered my child." (emphasis added)

**Sarah**

"I was 16 weeks. **The information was breezed over and my mind was numb to any explanation**. No one explained that it could affect getting pregnant in the future. I have damage to both my fallopian tubes which has made natural pregnancy impossible. I chose to kill my baby and the consequence was that I wasn't able to have another naturally. Life begins at conception.

Having gone through IVF and seeing my child as 4 cells under a microscope and now as a healthy and vibrant three year old. I know beyond a doubt that abortion is wrong." (emphasis added)

**Linda T.**

"The procedure itself was explained, **but nothing about WHAT (or who) was actually being removed from the uterus.** I want women to know that abortion is not for their good and the **abortion clinics are clearly operating out of greed, not compassion for women.** We now know that life indeed begins at conception. Science has left no doubt about this. Abortion is about money for the abortion industry. It is absolutely NOT about helping women. I was never informed or counseled about my options at the abortion clinic. Even **after I told the "counselor" that I believed abortion was wrong and said I would never have one, but I felt I had no choice.** She **quietly nodded and offered no alternatives.**" (emphasis added)

**S.H.**

"I would not be able to go to college if I had a child to deal with. It was a totally secretive thing."

**Jeanna R.**

"I definitely was not talked to about the fact that the baby was alive and that it would experience pain. **NO** one talked to me about any regrets/sadness/guilt I would have. **Look at the**

**ultrasound! See that beautiful baby moving around in there.** If you cannot care for that baby allow someone to adopt it. Don't do this to yourself - please." (emphasis added)

**Peg**

"I was 16 weeks. ... I almost died. I was very ill."

**Julie**

"Nothing that I recall was explained to me. The nurse was silent to me. It has changed my life forever. When you realize what you really did, it kicks you in the stomach and puts a hole in your heart. That's how I felt."

**Rakisha D.**

**"I was informed that it was only a blob of tissue and it will be a simple procedure and everything meaning my life will be normal.** They didn't tell me what type of harm it can do to a woman's body. The bleeding that occurs after the abortion was referred to as a normal menstrual cycle. I was in a mental prison for years not knowing what was the cause. I didn't know how to love my children. At home I was always afraid that something bad was going to happen to them. I had panic attacks and dealt with a lot of anxiety, guilt, shame, thinking in my own mind that everyone knows this secret," (emphasis added)

**Pamela W.**

"Nothing ever said about how it would take place - or any procedures or any consequences. Did not know what to expect except nurse told me after they started "Loud noise. Don't be alarmed." Within a year I was very depressed, suicidal. Still have anniversary reaction as a result of abortion. Thought I could not be a good mother so convinced husband to have vasectomy a month before marriage. Not only is it death of innocent child, but it could very well ruin your life. You will never be the same - emotionally, physically, relationships, sex all suffers."

**Katy S.**

"In countless ways I suffered from depression, anxiety, nightmares, fear of never being able to be pregnant again. I distrusted people. I was very angry. I deeply regret my abortion. I deeply miss my child."

**Patricia**

"Nothing was ever discussed. The family doctor let my parents decide for me. He never asked what I wanted. I have suffered with PTSD, bipolar, alcoholism, self-destructive life style until 1993. I can't enjoy my grandbaby born this year due to flashbacks."

**Kimberly S.**

"I was not informed of the procedure. No, not at all. No consequences were discussed, physical, emotional, mental, etc. **They told me "You know it's just a bunch of cells, don't you?"** Emotionally I could not resolve my feelings for more than 11 years. I've experienced grief, shame, fear, guilt. I felt sick when I saw pregnant women or babies." (emphasis added)

**Heather**

"I did not know the physical, spiritual, emotional and relational consequences of abortion."

**C.H.F.**

"In my heart I believed it was a wrong thing to do but I was so drained emotionally, physically, spiritually that all I thought, "This is the best way out." I now know what dreadful lies make up a "woman's choice"."

**Theresa J.**

"I was informed of a medical procedure in a room with other young girls and older women who were waiting to get an abortion, too. I was not informed that it was a life I was taking. It made me suicidal as a teenager, depressed."

**Nena K.**

"My doctor told me it was a quick no pain procedure. There is not a day that goes by that I don't think of my child and wish I hadn't had the abortion."

**P.G.R.**

"No one told me how much I would suffer emotionally after my abortion."

**L.S.**

"I don't remember them telling me the baby would be torn limb by limb until it was extracted from my body. I don't believe they told me anything about the cancer risks or severe bleeding that would occur. I will never forget that I killed a human being, my own flesh and blood, my child. It was very painful emotionally to remember this day by day."

**Julie B.**

"I received information from the South Bend Indiana Planned Parenthood abortion clinic about the benefits of abortion nothing negative such as physical, mental or emotional effects. I have suffered intense emotional problems, anger, depression, even suicidal thoughts as a direct result of my abortion. I also abused drugs and alcohol to try to numb my sorrow and grief. I have had to have a hysterectomy as a result. I have had problems sexually and emotional connecting with my husband. And I have not been the mother to my



children that I could have been. This decision I made over 25 years still to this very day has been the most destructive, horrible decision that I have ever made. I regret it and hate myself."

**Nicole C.**

"No - was not informed of anything - was told only it would not hurt. It would be done quickly and it was safe. I was 14 yrs. old. I have had two utopic pregnancies - regret, depression, unreasonable desire-efforts to have a child. **I never returned to school after my abortion.** My life became drugs and alcohol. I also became promiscuous. Abortion creates lasting problems emotionally, physically, and spiritually." (emphasis added)

**P.C.**

"I don't ever recall detailed information of the consequences of abortion, that the fetus is a human being in very early stages of pregnancy. That the doctor cannot see what he is doing!!! I just recall it was very methodical and uncaring. I was put in a room to watch a video with six other girls. **Who can watch a video in a time of despair?**" (emphasis added)

**Tricia A.**

"No, I was not adequately informed of the nature and consequences of abortion. The only question the staff asked was if I was still with the father of the baby. It was an extremely traumatic experience

that I will never forget. It took years to come to terms with what I now feel is murder. I still reap the consequences today with regret and worry."

**Holly J.**

"I was 16 weeks pregnant. It was a two day procedure. I have had to seek counseling. I have been suicidal. Others have had to deal with me in my fits of rage. **The years following I turned to drugs to numb myself of all I had been through.**" (emphasis added)

**R.**

"Three weeks later, as I stood before the bathroom vanity brushing my teeth ... I felt a sudden gush ... upon looking downward I saw the blood that covered my legs and feet and the entire floor. ... I then came to the realization that the little white specks amid the flow of blood those three weeks had been my aborted child's bone and cartilage left behind by both the suction hose and the doctor's curette."

**K.L.B.**

"Thankfully, to my knowledge, I have not had any physical consequences to my abortions. However, I suffered tremendously on an emotional and spiritual level for many years. I dealt with my abortion decisions by becoming emotionally numb, and eventually became incapable of attachment even in my relationships with my husband and two

daughters. My feelings of unworthiness and inability to give and receive lost cost my family a tremendous price. I continued to make bad choices in the years that following that created a lack of trust, love and intimacy in our marriage. Our marriage suffered and our family suffered because of our abortion decisions."

**M.D.L.**

"Depression, suicide attempts, a second abortion with no feelings whatsoever. Two miscarriages. I would not have had an abortion if it was not legal."

**K.W.**

"I was 14 yrs. old. I was raped by someone I knew ... and became pregnant from the rape. This happened when I was a freshman in high school and I dropped out of school in the 11th grade. I was on a course of self-destruction with drug use and lies, and my life was spiraling out of control. As a result of my early drug use, I contracted Hepatitis C, which since has not responded to treatment. **I feel that is the least I can endure for what I did to my child.**" (emphasis added)

**Marcy**

"I was given no information that I can recall. At first I wanted to die! I was depressed and very emotional at first. I did finally move on and thought I was OK until I got married and became pregnant with a baby I had planned. Throughout

that pregnancy I was stressed. So sure I would be punished for the abortion! I had some complications and I thought my son would be taken from me. **I also was given ultrasounds at the beginning of pregnancy and I knew I, in deed, had taken a life when I had the abortion.**" (emphasis added)

### **Melanie**

"For 20 years I have lived life as a broken woman - partially participating in life after falling into unhealthy habits. Recently, got help to deal with the pain of knowing I killed my own child.

### **Beth D.**

**"I was not given information about the development of my baby. I feel I was left in ignorance in regards to how alive my child really was.** I was asked if I understood that the procedure would **end the pregnancy.** During the procedure when I wanted it to end and the pain to stop, the nurse commented that having the baby in labor is far worse. I was not informed about any physical risks. I was not informed and had no idea, nor even imagined what emotional pain I would suffer following my abortion. I had deep regret. I seemed stuck in sorrowful frustration because there is no way to fix my mistake. It is final. I began to long for my baby. I had moments of time that I do not even remember, my grief was so heavy and consuming." (emphasis added)

**Priscilla B.**

"Not informed me of any consequences. It caused me great guilt and shame. I put walls up with relationships. Became workaholic and an alcoholic. Ended up with four surgeries - two of which were major."

**S.J.C.**

"I felt from the start I had done a bad thing. Guilt and shame were my constant companions. I had depression episodes. Anger at the point of rage. It has been a secret for over 30 years. My children had to deal with a mother who was constantly down and angry. It will sentence you to a life of regret."

**Marti L.**

"No, [I was not adequately informed] Felt the information was persuasive into getting the abortion. (Actually given an injection in hip of drugs to sedate me. Consequences: (mentally, spiritually) struggling with forgiveness."

**Elizabeth K.**

**"I never would have done it - NEVER!! If I knew the truth about fetal development or the possible side effects to me!** Before he started the abortion I told the doctor I don't think I want to do it. He said I'd be okay. What a lie! My abortion ruined my life. I turned heavily to drinking, drugs,

sex, food - anything to help me TRY to numb the HORRIBLE, DEBILITATING pain from knowing I killed my own child, I've been on meds for depression for 15 years. Been suicidal, terrible FLASHBACKS that still continue to keep me from regular GYN appointments. Failed relationships-self-hate, many hundreds of hours in therapy, retreats, crying, regret. I had pre-cancerous cells on my cervix from my abortion." (emphasis added)

**Barbara**

"I went to Planned Parenthood no other option was discussed. It was as if abortion was the only solution to my pregnancy. My abortion is the biggest mistake and regret of my life. I'm very sad that I went through with the procedure. I regret not knowing the child that was destroyed."

**Carolyn C.**

"No one said a word about anything, they just performed the procedure and I left. Abortion affected me with secrecy, guilt, shame, depression, numbing of emotions, denial. The pain and the consequences are long lasting and far reaching."

**L.W.**

"Never was the child within me referred to as a baby or given other choices. **I had my immature mind made up and they were happy to take my money.** No one told me the pain I would feel in my heart for the rest of my life. **I still do not have**

**a positive self-image of myself, struggle with self-esteem."** (emphasis added)

**Melanie P.**

"For the last 25/26 years I have kept this secret from my spouse and children - everyone. It has been a huge burden to bear. I was too ashamed to tell anyone. I feared all would hate me, look down on me. Abortion is a pain in your soul that never leaves."

**M.H.**

"I was not informed of the emotional and mental anguish of abortion. Abortion has affected me very negatively. After the first abortion, I drank excessively and had no pride. After the second abortion, I felt dead. I found out having an abortion was not the solution- it became the problem."

**Dena**

"I had breast cancer and a partial hysterectomy at 32 years of age. I suffered great depression, crying, needing help, but not finding any. I'm 53 now and there is a gap where my child or children should be now."

**Donna H.**

"I was not informed of the emotional effects or even that problems could occur to cause sterilization. The emotional effects of that decision have haunted

me for years. It affected every relationship in my life. I became "emotionally stunted", unsure of my own capabilities, making decisions was very gut wrenching."

**Janet S.**

"I was only told that it would not hurt much,, that I would only experience light cramping. No one explained the emotional damage that would be caused by the abortion. I carried around guilt and shame for every 20 years. I have never been able to have children."

**Diann**

"Very little was discussed about my options. It was a very cold and business like atmosphere. No one seemed to care at all. There was no discussion. It's a scar and bad memory that will always be there."

**Linda S.**

"I had a general idea of the procedure, but **I was in such a state of shock because of the pregnancy. I don't believe I understood anything that was being said. All I knew is that I wanted a quick fix to the problem.** I wasn't given any information about the mental and psychological impact that would stay with me the rest of my life." (emphasis added)

**Cathy**



"I was given no choice or educated on the matter, absolutely no teach was done. I was angry and then depressed for several years. **I became more sexually active because "who cares... there was no consequence."** (emphasis added)

**Bernadette R.**

"It caused a separation of my body, mind and soul. I tried to escape thru alcohol, drugs and even an attempt of suicide. I believe the only thing that kept me going was I had 2 sons, that needed me to somehow pull myself together. The fact is that because it was so traumatic for me, some memories of it are buried so deep, that I can't recall all the details. **If what PP doctor said was true about the ovarian cyst, they should have done a sonogram and showed me. I can't help but believe that they lied about the facts of the cyst, saying it would have endangered me to the point of being bedridden or worse.** It could have gotten larger than the baby. I believed what the doctor said, he was the professional, and I was a frightened, confused single mother. I have come to realize that they didn't want to show me anything but guide me to what they wanted, an abortion. I now have trouble trusting anyone." (emphasis added)

**Christine H.**

"I wasn't given any counseling at all. No other options. Adoption was never discussed. It seemed like an assembly line ...The girl told me I'd feel

much better when it was over. I was never advised of the psychological ramifications of having an abortion. It's affected every area of my life. I lived with shame and regret of abortion for decades. Depression. Nagging thoughts of suicide. Loss of self-confidence, loss of self-respect, unable to connect with people, unable to have healthy relationships. Afraid people would discover my "secret". Self-loathing."

**Sarah L.**

"To an extent yes, I knew it would take the life of my baby. But I didn't know what that mean. It might seem like a cop out, but I'd had it drilled into my head that it was just a clump of cells, not a real baby yet, so it's not death - just abortion. Emotional consequences... not even a little bit informed... plus I was told I was lucky that I had no physical complications. It ruined my life and I'll leave it at that. Worst. Day. Ever. And mine was fairly early, no complications, blah, blah, blah ... still now I'm just the mother of a dead baby.