



HOUSE BILL 125

On February 24, 2011 Representative Lynn Wachtmann (R-Napoleon) introduced H.B. 125, legislation that would effectively outlaw abortion in Ohio. Before passage in the House, a substitute version of the bill was accepted. Sub. H.B. 125 has been dubbed “The Heartbeat Bill” by its supporters because it would require doctors to search for a fetal heartbeat prior to performing an abortion. If a heartbeat is found, the doctor would be required to play the audio to the patient, require the patient to sign a statement that she had heard the audio, and the abortion would be outlawed except to protect the woman’s life.

WHAT THIS BILL MEANS FOR SURVIVORS OF RAPE OR INCEST

This legislation, if upheld, would ban abortion at a point in pregnancy when many women do not yet realize they are pregnant.

This legislation has no exceptions for pregnancies that are a result of rape or incest.

- Approximately 5% of survivors (over 32,000 women) will become pregnant as a result of rape every year, with 50% of those individuals choosing abortion.¹
- Adolescent girls who experience intimate partner violence are 4-6 times more likely to become pregnant than girls in non-abusive relationship.²
- 40% of pregnant women in abusive relationships report their pregnancy was unintended, as opposed to only 8% of women in non-abusive relationships.³

Rape is about power and control. House Bill 125 is in opposition of victim-centered services and trauma-informed care. By taking away a survivor’s ability to make a decision of how to handle a pregnancy following rape, she is being re-victimized. We need to give her the power to make her own decision.

TAKE ACTION. SHARE YOUR STORY.

TELL US HOW THIS BILL WOULD IMPACT SURVIVORS.

We want to hear from you. If you and any survivors you work with are interested in providing future testimony or sharing experiences with us that we can take to future hearings and advocate for survivors, please send them to khanna@oaesv.org.

¹ Holmes, M.M., Resnick, H.S., Kilpatrick, D.G. & Best, C.L. (1996). Rape-related pregnancy: Estimates and descriptive characteristics from a national sample of women. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 175 (2), 320-325.

² Silverman, J.G., Raj, A., & Clements, K. (2004). Dating violence and associated sexual risk and pregnancy among adolescent girls in the United States. *Pediatrics*, 114 (2), e220-225.

³ Hathaway, J.E., Mucci, L.A., Silverman, J.G., Brooks, D.R., Mathews, R., & Pavlos, C.A. (2000). Health status and health care use of Massachusetts women reporting partner abuse. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 19 (4), 318-321.