

TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATOR:

My name is Suzi Dewing. I am the Pennsylvania state representative for American Victims of Abortion. AVA is a national organization comprised of mothers and fathers, grandparents and siblings of aborted children.

We have a sincere interest in the 1979-1989 Abortion Control Act being accepted by this committee. Our specific concern is with the "informed consent" section of the bill. As women in this state who have had the personal experience of abortion, we feel that women have the right to all the information proposed in the ACA.

In order for a woman to make a choice she must be given the best information available to make an honest decision. If important facts are withheld, many times the decision is in error.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my own personal experience with abortion. Prior to the actual abortion I did not receive an explanation of the surgical procedure that was to be performed on my body or any physical or emotional complications that I was at risk for. No one suggested that there were alternative services available to assist me if wanted to carry my child to full term. (I thought I would have to provide all financial and medical expenses myself). I had no idea about fetal development or what stage of pregnancy I was at. This was never determined by the physician or clinic that did the abortion.

As the doctor began the actual dilation and suction he told me what he was doing. I passed out from the extreme pain during the procedure because I was not given an anesthetic. As I left the clinic my emotional state immediately changed. I suffered from depression and anger. I withdrew from family and friends and abused drugs and alcohol to escape the pain. I became obsessed with getting pregnant and having a baby. Within six months I was pregnant for the second time. When I miscarried at 16 weeks the emotional pain was compounded by guilt. I became pregnant for a third time 3 months later only to miscarry again. I was convinced that my abortion was a grave mistake.

I have since learned that these emotional responses I had are common among women who abort. With every abortion the risk of miscarriage, tubal pregnancy, labor complications and sterility greatly increases.

I have since delivered four healthy children and lost another to miscarriage. As I look at each one of my precious children I see unique individuals. One can never replace another.

My testimony, along with several other women across the state, has revealed the need to adequately inform and prepare each woman before she makes the decision to abort her baby. We have been kept in the dark and led to believe that because abortion is legal, it is safe. Not so in my case. My abortion did not solve my problem, it created many more that have taken years to overcome.

I believe that this bill is in the best interests of all women in the state of Pennsylvania to protect them from misinformation or no information about the health and well-being of themselves and their children.

AFFIDAVIT OF JULIE CORL

My name is Julie Corl. In March of 1977, I had an abortion performed at Hillcrest Clinic, 2709 North Front Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Upon arrival at the clinic, I was ushered through each step as if I were on an assembly line. During the counseling session I was asked if I thought about the alternatives. My reply was that I could not raise a baby. I was then deemed mature enough to handle an abortion. The options available were never even discussed with me. The risks involved were never covered. Fetal development was never covered. I was told the procedure was safe and simple with just a small amount of bleeding and light cramping. I was also told my baby was not a baby yet - just fetal tissue. Everything told to me was a lie. I had severe pain and heavy bleeding for two days confining me to bed. One week after the abortion I hemorrhaged. When I returned to the clinic with my problem, I was met not with the concern they claim to have for women, but instead with anger that I would dare to present to them with a complication.

When the abortion was over I realized too late that it was a wrong decision. If I had been given proper information on fetal development, the risks involved in the procedure, and counseled about what options were available to me, and then given time to digest this information, I feel certain I would not have had an abortion. Therefore, I feel the twenty-four hour waiting period in House Bill 1979 is essential for women to have to enable them to consider the alternatives available to them.

Julie L. Corl

10-12-89

Elizabeth M. Rehrig

10-12-89



Susan H. Jennings
858 Hessler Road
Manheim, Pennsylvania 17345

October 11, 1989

Dear Gentlemen or Madam:

I had an abortion at the
Reproductive Health and Counseling
Center, Crozer Chester Medical Center
Annex, 15th & Upland Avenue,
Chester, Pennsylvania 19013 in
April, 1985.

I was not shown any pictures
of fetal development. I did not
receive any counseling of alternative
options, such as adoption. I was not
warned of possible emotional and physical
consequences of abortion.

To the best of my recollection,
the "counselor" instructed me to check

off the reason for my desire to abort
from a list of reasons which she gave
to me. After I had checked off the
reason relating to "Family," she said
"That's good enough," and snatched
the paper from my hands. I then
recall being quickly ushered to the next
phase of the assembly line.

Since the abortion, I have
suffered from mental and emotional
anguish, guilt, depression and grief
which has been detrimental to my
well being and has affected other family
members. This has strengthened my resolve
to warn other women about abortion
and the resulting devastation.

Sincerely,
Susan H. Jennings
Susan H. Jennings

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF LANCASTER

to before me, a Notary Public, this 11th day of October

S. Plasterer

PANELA S. PLASTERER, NOTARY PUBLIC
MANHEIM BORO, LANCASTER COUNTY
COMMISSION EXPIRES MARCH 31, 1990

October 10, 1989

I, Judy Pucko, had an abortion in late March of 1977 at Harrisburg Reproductive Health Center. At that time, as Judy (Jeri) Kissler, I had gone to Planned Parenthood in Lancaster for my pregnancy test. Upon learning the results were positive, the counselor at PP suggested that, at the age of eighteen, it would be a burden to have a baby so young with my future ahead of me. When I told her that I really wanted my baby, did not want an abortion, and just wanted someone to help me tell my parents, she continued talking about abortion, never mentioned any alternatives, such as adoption, and gave me three pamphlets on abortion clinics outside of Lancaster County. Since I was eight to ten weeks pregnant, and could only go on Saturdays, the counselor suggested Harrisburg and gave me the phone to call and make an appointment. I told her that I wasn't ready to move that fast and again said that I didn't want an abortion but just wanted somebody to help me tell my parents. Since she wasn't offering me any positive help, I left and for the next few days fought with my boyfriend constantly because he also wanted me to have an abortion. I finally called Harrisburg and made my appointment.

At the clinic, before my abortions, a counselor talked with a group of about ten girls on birth control and what type would be best for each girl. Before we went to change to go to the waiting room, the counselor asked each person in the room to tell everyone else whose idea it was to have the abortion. I was about in the middle of the group and everyone up until me had said that they wanted their abortion. I thought this was my last chance to cry for help and I told them all that I did not want an abortion but that I wanted to have my baby and needed someone to help me tell my parents. I also said that I didn't want to marry my boyfriend because I wasn't ready for marriage, but, because his parents had to get married with him, and because his father was abusive, he wanted me to have an abortion because he wanted to prove to his parents that he could marry a girl and "do it the right way." The counselor seemed irritated and said, and I quote, "You are being romantic and your boyfriend is being realistic." It was at that point that I

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Knew she didn't care for me at all but I was still too scared and couldn't walk out of that horrible place. Needless to say I had the abortion and cannot describe the loss, pain, guilt and suffering that I have felt since then. I immediately set out to have another baby to replace the one taken from me and married my boyfriend for that reason only. Since that reason isn't a good one for marriage, it would be easy to understand the marriage problems that we had to face later. After my marriage was almost destroyed I sought counseling to find out why my personality had changed so much. I praise the Lord for healing me, my husband, and our marriage and for blessing us with four beautiful, precious children who truly are our heritage.

Sincerely,
Jeralyn Padel



Laura M. Flory

I, Theresa A. Long, had an abortion in 1976 at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Lebanon County, Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

I had not originally intended to abort. When the Ob.-Gyn. clinic personnel found out I was single & pregnant; they escorted me to a private room where a doctor & nurse explained about a simple surgical procedure to remove the product of conception. They never called it an abortion, but referred to it as a D+E. They told me that I didn't have much time & had to make a decision in 2-3 wks. before the 2nd trimester. They never showed me fetal development pictures. They never told me about any risks involved. They never called my unborn child a baby - only a fetus. They never offered any other alternatives to my situation. I asked if my unborn child would feel pain & I was told, no - it wasn't formed yet. I was never told it had a heartbeat already & brainwaves, as I discovered years later.

There had been no support, if I chose to keep my baby. It seemed no one cared that I had conceived a child - just that I had a problem to get rid of. I felt as though it was my only option considering the circumstances. That it was okay because it was legal & that it was the best choice since my doctor even suggested it.

I was put to sleep for the surgery. Upon awakening I realized my baby had been killed. Up until this point I had been "numb". I suffered psychologically & wanted to punish myself. I became severely depressed which led to a suicide attempt 5 mo. later. At this time I was hospitalized for 3 mo. & had counseling for 1 yr. afterwards.

I regret that I was rushed to end my baby's life at 11 wks

Theresa A. Long, known to me to be the person above, affirmed that the above is true and correct to the best of her information, knowledge and belief.

Betty Jo Wick

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: 4/7/89

Lebanon, Lebanon Co., PA

Theresa A. Long

Theresa A. Long

NOTARIAL SEAL

BETTY JO WICK, NOTARY PUBLIC

Lebanon, Lebanon County

My Commission Expires April 7, 1990