

Dear Members of the South Carolina House of Representatives:

I encourage you to vote in favor of H.3355 without amendment this coming Tuesday.

I write you today from my personal experience. Four and a half years ago I had an abortion at Planned Parenthood in Columbia. I remember signing a number of papers. In my state of severe emotional distress, apparently I signed a paper saying I had the right to review material on fetal development. No such material was provided to me. Planned Parenthood also charged me for a compulsory ultrasound as part of the procedure, but they failed to provide me the opportunity to see my child's image. What I chose to do that day I cannot undo, and I will have to live with the consequences of this choice for the rest of my life.

Recently I went to Planned Parenthood and requested a copy of my medical records. Planned Parenthood may have complied with the letter of the Woman's Right to Know law. I now know they certainly failed to comply with the spirit of the law, which is to give pregnant women accurate scientific materials informing them of the approximate gestational age of the unborn child.

I now have the only picture I will ever have of my child, which was the ultrasound image put in my records at Planned Parenthood. If Planned Parenthood had been required to show me this image, I would not have made this terrible "choice." As deeply personal and humiliating this experience was and still is, I will provide a copy of my medical records to you upon your request.

Over forty percent of women will have an abortion by the age of 40 for a variety of reasons. Most of these women end in a state of despair clinically known as Post Abortion Syndrome from which I have suffered severely. This legislation will serve as one last chance for those women who, like myself, unknowingly choose against their better judgment. It will prevent many women like myself from battling for years with darkness, depression, and self-loathing. Many of these psychological disruptions can be prevented. More women will not have to bear the relentless heartache knowing they will never be able to hug their lost child. Will you stand up and vote for H.3355 without amendment?

Sincerely,

Marie Connelly