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Testimony: House Bill 997, Equal Protection for Unborn Human Life Act
Hearing: Health and Government Operations
Position: Support

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Chairman Pendergrass, Vice-Chairman Pena-Melnyk, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in favor of HB997.

Since the parents who raised me could not have children, adoption was the path they chose. I was unaware of this until my parents told us (my younger brother was adopted too) at a time when they thought we were old enough to understand it.

Was I upset? Not at all. I carried it like a badge of honor, as my parents would humorously remind me that “we chose you, the others had to take them.”

Of course, we did not have the expansive medical advances that we have today. Even now we know a heartbeat is accessible by ultrasound in as few as 6-7 weeks, and advances to save the life of the mother in extreme cases has also increased greatly. So viability is much sooner than we knew at that time.

Yet, even without having that knowledge over 50 years ago, my parents considered the sacredness of life, and the desire to raise their own children. They could not foresee their future son as an All-American runner, world record holder, with a future daughter-in law, 4 grandchildren, and other countless joys that the fruits of their choices made. I am blessed with one grandchild myself, a joy I would not have experienced otherwise.

The modern day Hippocratic Oath invokes the Almighty on two occasions, as well as committing to purity, holiness and beneficence. It also states “I will neither prescribe nor administer a lethal dose of medicine to any patient even if asked nor counsel any such thing nor perform the utmost respect for every human life from fertilization to natural death and reject abortion that deliberately takes a unique human life.”

Not enacting this bill would be in direct violation of the oath that every physician swears upon, and allows said oath to be nothing more than a pro-forma ritual, with little value in upholding that tradition.

Everyone involved in my survival were pro-choice:
My blood parents chose life, even though they could not keep me.
My adoptive parents chose life, and chose me.
And now I live because they chose life.

I thank you for your time today, I am available for any questions you may have.

The Hippocratic Oath

(Modern Version)

I SWEAR in the presence of the Almighty and before my family, my teachers and my peers that according to my ability and judgment I will keep this Oath and Stipulation.

TO RECKON all who have taught me this art equally dear to me as my parents and in the same spirit and dedication to impart a knowledge of the art of medicine to others. I will continue with diligence to keep abreast of advances in medicine. I will treat without exception all who seek my ministrations, so long as the treatment of others is not compromised thereby, and I will seek the counsel of particularly skilled physicians where indicated for the benefit of my patient.

I WILL FOLLOW that method of treatment which according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patient and abstain from whatever is harmful or mischievous. I will neither prescribe nor administer a lethal dose of medicine to any patient even if asked nor counsel any such thing nor perform the utmost respect for every human life from fertilization to natural death and reject abortion that deliberately takes a unique human life.

WITH PURITY, HOLINESS AND BENEFICENCE I will pass my life and practice my art. Except for the prudent correction of an imminent danger, I will neither treat any patient nor carry out any research on any human being without the valid informed consent of the subject or the appropriate legal protector thereof, understanding that research must have as its purpose the furtherance of the health of that individual. Into whatever patient setting I enter, I will go for the benefit of the sick and will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief or corruption and further from the seduction of any patient.

WHATEVER IN CONNECTION with my professional practice or not in connection with it I may see or hear in the lives of my patients which ought not be spoken abroad, I will not divulge, reckoning that all such should be kept secret.

WHILE I CONTINUE to keep this Oath unviolated may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of the art and science of medicine with the blessing of the Almighty and respected by my peers and society, but should I trespass and violate this Oath, may the reverse be by my lot.