

Written Testimony

Greetings to you all. My name is Shantel Gross and I am a representative of Sidewalk Advocates for Life in Baltimore, Maryland.

I've witnessed and have engaged with many youth and young adults who are misguided in our current time. Many have felt the pressures of this world and the demands of society. Because of this overwhelming pressure, there have been numerous cases of drug addiction, human trafficking, abuse, and hopelessness, to name a few.

My mother could relate to that pressure, raising two children as a single parent. When she found out that she was pregnant with me, she considered all of her options. Being in an abusive relationship, she considered abortion. But when she got to that clinic, she felt that she could not go through with the procedure. In September of 1991 I was born, the same year that The Maryland Freedom of Choice Act was formed allowing abortion-on-demand, for any reason and up until birth. My mom chose life and because of her decision, I am standing here before you today. By the grace of God she has been married for over 20 years to my stepfather. She was given resources and aid to help her through the challenging times.

The SB0798 Abortion Amendment would risk the shutting down of pregnancy centers which support families and their babies, force the hands of physicians who are opposed to abortions, and violate the free exercise of religion.

There are future doctors, lawyers, lawmakers, pastors, teachers, scientists, and inventors with solutions to bring to our world whose lives are at stake. I stand here to say that every life is important and oppression of any form, including abortion, is not the answer. Let's change the narrative and show that we are capable of overcoming our obstacles. Thank you.