

Good afternoon. My name is Maureen Gaffney. I am a mother to four living children and two stillborn daughters, Ann and Sofija, who passed away five years ago. I am also a therapist specializing in grief and pregnancy loss.

“They don’t count.” Those were the words our accountant said when I called to ask where we could list our daughters on our tax documents.

As I sat there quietly crying, I was taken right back to the silence and grief of losing them. In that moment, I felt the weight of being told my daughters did not count as much as their living brothers.

The financial impact of their loss was overwhelming—hospital bills, genetic testing, therapy, a headstone, and baby items we couldn’t return. When your baby lives, you can’t leave the hospital without a name. When your baby dies, you can’t leave without choosing a funeral home. It was devastating to realize it cost us more to have a baby who died than to have a baby who lived.

And yet, what we are asking for is simple: to count the child we carried. The child we loved.

The hardest part of this experience is the silence. Our babies are born into a silent room. The cries never come. And then we return to a world that often expects us to carry that loss quietly.

This bill is more than financial support. It is recognition. It is a voice for the baby who never cried, and a message to families like mine that our children matter and we do not have to live in silence.

I respectfully urge you to support this bill