

Kansas House Federal and State Affairs Committee

Kansas Senate Judiciary Committee

9:00 AM, Room 346 –S

Testimony in Opposition to HCR 5019

Shawnee Stoner

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Dear Chairman Barker, Chairman Wilborn and Members of the Committees,

I am here to share my abortion story with some who do not believe that it is okay to have an abortion. Everyone is entitled to their own opinions. Everyone has their own beliefs. I have NEVER been a believer in abortion until something tragic happened in my life.

I am the kind of woman that LOVES kids. I have a niece I helped raise, all my friends have children that call me aunt. My career has been working in children's hospitals and schools. Kids are wonderful in my eyes and help us grow and learn. They are smart and extraordinary to watch grow and they are our future.

Nine months ago I began seeing a guy. After a few months, I became uncomfortable with how attached he was to me after only a few months. He was texting me 24:7, coming to my house uninvited, showing up and leaving presents while I was at work. Suffice it to say, I began feeling a weird vibe. I ended up calling it off.

In the beginning things were great.

A couple weeks after we split up I noticed that I kept running into him out and about on the weekends. Every bar I went to it seemed like he was there and for some reason he always ended up "taking me home because I asked him too" even though there was never any proof of it.

One morning I woke up and he was in my bed. I was nervous and uncomfortable. I had been drinking the night before, but I did not remember inviting anyone into my home or into my bed.

It was not until several weeks later when I started to question my recent weight gain, my increased appetite, and always being tired. I took an in home test and it immediately showed positive. I was mortified. I called my sister and could not even talk. I just screamed and bawled and thought my life was completely over.

I made a doctor appointment for confirmation and sure enough it was the same results. I was around 6 weeks along. That's when I remembered waking up in my home with my ex in my bed, uninvited. I was alone. I was scared. How was I going to raise a baby on my own when I couldn't even afford to feed myself or pay my own bills?

I never thought at age 27 I would be pregnant. Especially with a man that I did not love.

This was not a simple decision for me. I did a lot of research. I talked it over with many professionals and weighed the pros and cons. I took over a week to make up my mind. I ended up driving to a clinic three hours out of my way because of their online reviews.

I actually consider myself pro-life, but I would not change my decision for the world. I cannot even look at the man involved without feeling sick to my stomach. I did not want to raise my child knowing that this man had taken advantage of one drunken night. I know I put myself in that situation by having just “one more,” but that does not make what he did after the bar okay.

It took SO much courage and strength to go to my appointment. I had a close friend take me and sit with me. She’s pregnant. Married. In love. She didn’t ask me questions. She didn’t try to change my mind. She supported me whether she thought my decision was right or wrong. She wanted what was best for me.

Afterward I felt like a huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I do not speak about it and I keep it to myself. Sometimes I think “what if it didn’t happen, would I be seeing that guy and pretending to love him and raise a human with him?” Or would I be miserable and regretting every life choice I ever made and end up hurting myself?

You cannot make up someone else’s mind for them. No matter how much information you feed them. That person is going to do what is best for them, as they should. In our country we have the right to do what we believe is best for ourselves. Nowhere is that more important than when it comes to pregnancy, child rearing, and family formation.

I will always be pro-life. But I am also pro that woman’s life. I know what it is like to be in her shoes. Until you experience something like I did you won’t understand.

You may judge me harshly and think I am a “killer.” Turns out I am a dedicated worker, who loves life, who lives freely and believes in God and the path he has lead me down thus far. I am no killer; I am simply human living MY life. Women like me do not need politicians like you making decisions about our bodies.