

## **Written Testimony in Opposition to SF37 (Her)**

Minnesota House Rules and Legislative Administration Committee

May 6, 2024

Submitted by: Haley Sargent

My name is Haley Sargent. I am 28 years old and a life-long citizen of the state of Minnesota. I stand in opposition to the proposed amendment to the Minnesota Constitution's equal rights clause. Abortion up until the moment of birth for any reason is neither a morally sound position nor is it reflective of the will of the people of Minnesota. We deserve better. As a woman, I demand better. The societal issues we face that drive women into seeking abortion will never be solved by a constitutional amendment. These proposed changes do nothing but demonstrate cowardice and laziness on the part of the legislature. Instead of investing in community resources and programs that would empower women to keep their precious babies, you would simply seek to funnel them into an abortion pipeline, murdering their unborn children and leaving them scarred and broken, with none of their original conditions improved. Shame on you if you think this is an act of compassion, kindness, or empowerment! Making our innocent children pay for the evils of the world—evils which they had no hand in causing—is despicable. Again, I say, we, the citizens of Minnesota, demand better! We will not tolerate such unadulterated evil being written into our state's most foundational documents.

What's more, you also seek to remove all conscience protections from Minnesotans who object to abortion by removing the word "creed" from our Constitution's equal rights clause. There are many citizens, like myself, who have deeply held religious beliefs. These beliefs must be protected from undue discrimination, and by removing this language, you would sweep away what little protection still remains. This represents a gross violation of our First Amendment rights. My Christian faith is both sincere and legitimate, and you have no right to remove my conscience protections in a crusade to make Minnesota an 'abortion sanctuary.'

I am, admittedly, not an independent third party. I have deeply personal reasons to be opposed to abortion that go above and beyond my Christian faith and my personal convictions. I, myself, am one of countless individuals who might not be here today if it weren't for my own mother's deeply held faith and convictions about the value of life. Conceived out of wedlock and born to my mother the day before her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, I was precisely the sort of child people would have called my mother 'irresponsible' for having. They would have told her that she was 'ruining her life' by letting me live. But she did anyway. She chose to value me and give me life when others might not have. My life has not been an easy one. I know what it is to grow up without means. I know what it is to be abused. I know what it is to suffer from a disability. All these things, too, are reasons we're told that women 'need' to have a 'right' to abortion, as if these are somehow justifiable reasons to kill another human being. I will tell you now, they are not, and if you believe they are, then you condemn me to death. Viewpoints have consequences.

Consequences that you don't have to suffer but rather which you choose to off-load onto our

children. We will not tolerate it! There is no 'right to an abortion.' There is no justifiable reason for abortion. It is purely and simply the slaughter of the most vulnerable members of our society. It is oppression in its truest form.

Life begins at conception. There are countless ways that we can help women in difficult situations while also valuing and protecting the lives of the children in their wombs. These should be the solutions we are pursuing, not the godless bloodshed of abortion. If we fail to do so and instead continue to pursue these wicked ends of child sacrifice, then may God have mercy on our souls. "The LORD said, 'What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground'" (Gen. 4:10 NIV). Now is the moment to choose who we are. The world is watching. God is watching.