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To: Senate Committee on Health, Human Services, Insurance and Job Creation

RE: Testimony in Opposition of SB 398

Dear Sirs/Madams;

I wish I could be there in person for your hearing on February 27, 2008; however, due to the short notice I was unable to modify my schedule.

When I was seventeen years old, I chose to abort my baby. It was 1975. At that time, I was told that my body was just forming tissue prior to twelve weeks from conception. I was told in a simple, matter-of-fact manner that abortion was one of my three options. It was presented as though, by choosing abortion, I would be solving my problem (being pregnant and not married) as simply as curing an illness with medication. Abortion was presented as the fastest, simplest solution to a complicated situation. It was presented as simply another option.

I believed that information; but that information was false. Abortion is not a simple solution. It is not a method of curing an illness, as pregnancy is not an illness. It is not a form of birth control. Birth control is a means to prevent a life from existing. Abortion takes the life away after it already exists. Abortion kills. Abortion is not the simplest solution to a complicated situation.

I was young and naïve in 1975, not fully understanding the ramifications or the impact of my choice. I was trying to hide and escape from the fact that I had gotten pregnant. I did not seek the advice of anyone, not even my mother. The abortion clinic that I went to did not require parental consent.

In time, I grew to understand that through abortion I killed my baby; it was not just tissue. For example, after I married and became pregnant with our first daughter, I read all about the growth of a pre-born infant. It was quite clear that the pre-born infant was and is a baby right from the start. I have since read about technology that is able to test for birth defects, the baby's gender, and his or her propensity toward a particular colon cancer. Some of these tests can be done when a baby is only 8 cells big, when the baby is forming in a lab prior to being implanted in the mother during in vitro fertilization. Upon conception the baby has its own DNA. The baby is an individual upon conception; the baby is its own person.

Abortion adversely impacts the mother. In my case, I tried to hide my choice through silence and perfectionism. Being only human, making it impossible to be perfect, my attempts to hide my choice adversely impacted my self-esteem and my self-

confidence. Years later, I discovered that I had a hidden anger that manifested as rage, a feeling that I yet again tried to bury.

All pre-born infants deserve to be protected.

As I discovered the truth about abortion, I had to heal from its heartfelt wounds. How does a mother learn to live with the fact that she killed her own child? Wishing to deny this truth, I hid behind the pro-choice arguments. I hid behind those arguments for years to protect me from my own conscience. I eventually had to admit the truth. I had to tell my husband, my daughters, my mother and my siblings. It was the hardest message that I ever had to convey.

Fortunately for me, I know that through God's grace, I have been forgiven for my choice. This knowledge has enabled me to heal. However, I am aware of several women that have not yet learned to live with their past choice. Time does not heal all wounds.

Abortion kills one's own baby. All babies deserve a right to live. They cannot speak for themselves. It is our duty to protect them.

SB 398 proposes to repeal Wisconsin Statute 940.04. That statute protects the lives of all pre-born infants. I urge you to vote against SB 398. Wisconsin Statute 940.04 was the law of our state prior to Roe v. Wade, and it should remain on the books so that our state is able to immediately protect the lives of our youngest individuals, all pre-born infants, the moment Roe v. Wade is overturned. Accordingly, I urge this committee to vote against SB 398.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Sheila Luck