

Ladies and gentlemen of the legislature, my name is Robin Willegal. I am here to tell you my testimony in support of AB 427. I had a son at the age of 17 by a man I never married. He threatened to kill me, and abused my son. Soon after I dated and married my husband, I was 19, he was 18. Within a two year period, he graduated high school, joined the army, got married, and moved across the country. I got pregnant, miscarried, then he was sent off to Korea. Hard adjustments for any marriage. When he left we were barely speaking. Following family form, I sought comfort in the arms of another man, not knowing I was already pregnant. I called my husband to let him know what was going on.

He was not willing to chance that the child was not his. I never expected to hear his words. "I am raising one son that is not mine, I won't raise another. Get rid of it, or I am gone." My heart crushed, my head swam, and I was in shock. The man my son loved and called daddy was now willing to abandon him. What could I do to save both my children?

I sent pictures of the gestational age of the baby. I found two families willing to adopt. I begged I pleaded, I failed. He was adamant. Abort. On August 26th 1991, torn between two children, I aborted my baby. Before I got to the clinic the anguish started. Tremendous guilt, because I had fallen asleep and lost the last night of my babies life. The counseling at the clinic was this, "why are you here?"

The after affects became a cancer that metastasized through my entire life. I bled for months, refused help until years later a hysterectomy was unavoidable. I hated myself, my husband. I doubted my ability to be a good mother. While pregnant with my last two children, the emotional roller coaster drove my husband and I farther and farther apart. That distance exists today 15 years later.

Anything could trigger a major to minor break down. A picture of a mother holding her baby. A similar meal I had eaten while pregnant before the abortion. Every aspect of my life was saturated with what I had done.

I am not alone in my sufferings. Read the stories on the Rachel's Vineyard website, as well as many others sites that are out there. Read the resources I have listed in my submitted statement. Listen with your heart. These are the places we who are post abortive go for treatment, but like many forms of cancer, the pain is treatable not curable.

Women are vulnerable when pregnant. Needing a lot of help, support and understanding. Some women need more then others. So they are not forced to give into their fears and the pressure to abort. Coercion is no ones choice. Please pass this bill.