

Dear Legislators, Governor, and Anyone Reading This:

Anti-abortion and pro-life policy is just as draconian as China's one and two-child policies.

If you are in favor of anti-abortion and pro-life policies, please reconsider. Taking away access to safe and legal abortion procedures is in spirit the same as the forced abortions and sterilizations that have occurred under China's one and two-child policies. Both are instances of the state overstepping and suppressing individual reproductive sovereignty, privacy, and choice.

Forcing the impregnated to carry a pregnancy to term, regardless of circumstances or how they feel about the impregnator, is just as draconian as forcing an abortion on someone who wants a child. In the former, proponents cite religious faith and morality and in the latter China has cited population control.

How would the proposed anti-abortion constitutional amendment make Iowa like China? Such an amendment would turn us into a state that, like China, butts into personal reproductive decisions and takes away individual rights. Do we really want the state to become the 800-pound gorilla making sure that the unwillingly impregnated stay restrained and pregnant in the name of the unborn and the faith-based, not evidence-based, agenda of one faction of their fellow citizenry? How would that faith-based faction of citizenry feel if the state imposed forced abortions on them because a population-control faction had gained political power? Neither are hypothetical situations but have actually played out in different global states, including our nation. In our state of Iowa, we have a good middle ground of choice. Don't mess it up. Taking away choice in either direction on this is an attack on freedom.

Instead of attempting to legislate one faction's opinion down everyone's throats, a more effective path might be to focus on creating a state where everyone has access to outstanding reproductive health care

and where teenaged adopted children like Natalie Finn don't starve to death because the State has failed in its duties to the born.

If you have publicly declared yourself pro-life and anti-abortion, there are ways to work towards reducing the number of abortions sought without relying on the state to impose your way on everyone. No, I do not mean legislating undue burdens on women and girls to restrict and deny access and generally make our lives more difficult. How about opening non-profit daycares and paying the staff living wages? What about more support for women to work or not work as needed based on their health needs during pregnancy while still maintaining enough income to live on? What about addressing those vulnerable months post-birth where some people don't have the financial resources to take twelve weeks of unpaid family medical leave, if they even qualify for this. If your agenda is to protect mothers and the unborn, then focus your energies on creating policies that support people instead of slamming our hard-won women's rights.

Remember that there is a difference between evangelism and coercion. Attempting to amend the Iowa Constitution as a groundwork for taking away access to safe and legal abortions goes too far into the realm of coercion.

Sincerely,

Sarah Singelee