

Deirdre Cooper Testimony

My name is Deirdre Cooper. I am a Public Policy Analyst for Texas Alliance for Life. I strongly support the Texas abortion laws.

Now that mothers and children are protected from abortion in Texas, some are suggesting that there should be exceptions made to allow mothers to abort children who have been given a fatal diagnosis. This is not compassion; this is discrimination. As a mother of a child with a fatal diagnosis, I would like to share his story and explain why I oppose adding exceptions to Texas abortion laws.

On New Year's Eve, December 31, 2020, we learned that our beloved unborn child had Trisomy 18. Trisomy 18, or Edwards syndrome, is a severe chromosomal abnormality resulting in three copies of the 18th chromosome. It can be life-limiting or, quite often, fatal.

A high-risk physician asked us if we wanted time to “think about what to do.” By this, she implied we might want to consider killing our child because of his diagnosis.

We immediately told her we loved this child and would fight for him. We asked about treatment options. The doctor was surprised and asked if we needed more time to think. I said that killing our child was not an option.



We found a new doctor, and we fought for our unborn son for the next four months.

By 36 weeks, our son's condition was worsening, so our induction was scheduled. We walked into the hospital hoping for a miracle but knowing we most likely would not leave with a living baby. We knew we had done everything we could for our son. Sadly, our beloved son, Bosco Joseph Paul, died during childbirth on April 20, 2021. He was delivered peacefully into my hands, adored by his brothers and sisters shortly after his delivery, and buried lovingly by our family and friends. He weighed 4 pounds 4 ounces. He had dark hair. He was beautiful. Bosco was loved every day he was with us.

One hundred twenty people came to Bosco's funeral Mass to support us and bear witness to the value of each human life and the enormity of our loss. His gravestone is an enduring sign that our son existed and that his life, while brief, mattered.

Carrying Bosco in my womb was the greatest honor of my life. For four months, I had the privilege of sharing his story with anyone who asked about my pregnancy. I was able to explain Trisomy 18, that our son was dying, and ask for prayers. Each day, I woke up thanking God that Bosco was still alive. We had been granted one more day with him – what a blessing! It also allowed us to plan his funeral and prepare our children for his impending death.



Aborting a child with fatal abnormalities is discrimination, and it does not make anything better. Once given a fatal diagnosis, parents are now on a unique journey of preparing for the death of a beloved child. But abortion robs that child of the chance at life, no matter how short. It robs the child of the chance of a miracle or the chance that the medical diagnosis is wrong. Abortion tries to control when the child dies as to avoid some pain down the line. But the pain is still there. Choosing life allows the child to write his own story and for parents to love him along that journey.

People say these are “such difficult situations,” but I disagree. There is nothing difficult about *not* killing your child, no matter his diagnosis. Losing a child *is* difficult, yes, but aborting that child doesn’t make it any easier.

I am grateful that we did not take the advice of those who suggested we abort Bosco. There is nothing compassionate about aborting a child with a disability now to avoid his death later.

I am here today in honor of my beloved son Bosco, to stand firmly against all exceptions. Bosco did not deserve to be aborted because of his diagnosis. His life was not a “choice.” It is unacceptable to discriminate against a baby because of his diagnosis.

Thank you.

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