

**Name:** Melissa Manion

**Title:**

**Organization or Agency:**

**Topic:** SB01310 - AA AUTHORIZING HOSPITALS TO INSTALL DEVICES ON AN EXTERIOR WALL OF AN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TO FACILITATE THE VOLUNTARY SURRENDER OF INFANTS TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT STAFF.

Supports

**Testimony:**

I am testifying in strong support for SB01310 In a state that has very strong protections for the woman's right to choose, it only makes sense to have one of those choices be the right to surrender her baby to a safe holding place with no concerns for consequences. This makes perfect sense and would empower and encourage women who feel they cannot parent for whatever reason, that they have a way out.

Sadly a few years back, a baby was left to die in a closet of a home right down the street from my house. I drove by the scene with my own children wondering why there were so many police and even crime scene investigators surrounding the home. I would find out the horrific truth a few days later. I cannot imagine the pain that baby endured gasping for air, alone, starving, crying with no one coming to help. And frankly the anguish that young mother will live with for the rest of her life knowing she left her baby to die scared and alone.

If our state had had baby drop off stations then that child could still be alive and that mother could have been free.

This is not a Republican or Democrat issue. EVERYONE should agree that having a safe haven drop off is what is best not just for the babies of our state but the moms who just need an alternative to parenting when that feels hopeless.

The story I shared has left a mark on my own heart ever since. It's not just happening in our state but all over the country. Many saw the video of the woman in New Mexico throwing her newborn in a dumpster only for the baby to thankfully have been found a few hours later by passers by. A quick Google search will reveal that there are sadly far too many of these stories that do not have a happy ending.

Ultimately this is about saving lives. Of course there need to be many steps taken and services available to help these vulnerable moms before they feel compelled to make a choice like surrendering their baby. However it seems to me that having the ability to do so if all else seems not enough is the most humane thing to offer both that baby and his or her mother.

I urge you all to please vote in strong favor of SB01310 and put Connecticut on the map with the other 19 states that have come to recognize the need for this option when it comes to choice for women who don't feel capable of parenting.