



## **PACE Post Abortion Counseling Education**

### **In Support of LD924**

**Hello. My name is Patti Camp, I live in Falmouth, Maine. I am a peer counselor and head up the Post Abortion Counseling Education at Abba, A Woman's Resource Center in Portland. I am here in support of LD 924. I've had the opportunity to facilitate many post abortion support groups at Abba.**

**Some of the most common statements I've heard are: 1) "If only I'd been given information on fetal development ", 2) " If only I hadn't felt pressured into getting it done quickly, if I had to wait I might have made a better choice", 3) "If I was informed of the risks involved. In many cases when the mother asked to see the ultra sound, she was denied. The woman was never informed as to what the procedure was going to be, in fact, most women state that they never met their abortion provider until moments before the procedure. If one were to have a tonsillectomy, the procedure would be explained to the patient in advance!**

**We see many women 1,2,3 and up to 25 years after their abortion and still dealing with depression, anxiety, and many other emotional disorders diagnosed by the medical profession.**

**According to the majority of the women in these support groups, they were never encouraged to seek counseling after their abortion, because they were never made aware of any issues they would have. It was about taking care of the problem and doing it quickly, but never about what she, the woman, might experience after the abortion, when in fact, many of these women have many impacting issues.**

**All the women in the groups have felt, to some degree, some of the following issues related to "Post Abortion Symptoms".**

**Guilt – she wondered why she had this guilt when she was told and may have felt it was the only answer to her problem at that moment.**

**Depression – She'd see a mother with her child or anything that pertained to children and that would dredge up memories of her abortion experience.**

**Also some of the women would have recurring nightmares of the abortion.**

A common concern as well is that near the anniversary of the abortion or the due date of the baby, she'd feel anxiety and depression. This, she stated, would happen year after year.

We've also seen women who've felt suicidal at times.

Some women would start living a self depreciating life style, sometimes drawn into alcohol and /or drugs to numb the existing hurts and pain, having promiscuous relationships to also numb the feelings of unworthiness.

What these women are told is that the abortion is a quick fix – what they're not told is that there are life- long physical and emotional consequences.

I've been facilitating these groups for 6 years and never have I heard a woman who has been happy following her abortion.

Please support LD924. Let women be given medical information and slow down the process so they can make an informed medical decision concerning their body and their future.