



Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Joseph Cohen. I am the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of West Virginia. I'm very sorry we once again are here today for a public hearing regarding yet ANOTHER piece of legislation which aims to interfere with a woman's right to self-determination.

There is a well-worn path on the carpet in this chamber from the seats to this microphone due to the yearly assault on women's right to choose. And the target of the legislation always seems to be those women with the least voice under this dome. Last year it was adolescents. And this year it is poor women.

For you see this bill only impacts poor and working class women. It has no effect on rich women. Under HB 4012, only poor and working class women have their access to abortion services curtailed. Only poor and working class women would be forced to beg in order to be able to exercise their constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy. And only poor and working class women have the very dignity of their basic bodily autonomy questioned.

This bill is part of the ongoing war on poor and working people we see in this legislature. If you care about poor and working class people, you cannot vote for this bill. Just as much as any vote on PEIA or SNAP, this bill will answer the question "which side are you on?"

Thank you.