

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

Thomas Jefferson wrote these words in the Declaration of Independence. He himself did not practice them, however. He believed that slaves' rights were superseded by the rights of their owners, that they were merely property of whatever white man owned them. The rights of white men mattered more than the unalienable Rights of Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Today, the bill before this committee states, "A fertilized egg, embryo, or fetus shall not have independent rights under Vermont law," while the mother, referred to as "the individual who becomes pregnant," "has the fundamental right to choose to carry a pregnancy to term, give birth to a child, or to have an abortion." In one clause, you are attempting to redefine what it means to be human.

The right to life truly is the most fundamental of all rights. Without question, it is the reason any of us are in this hall. Stripping the unborn child of his or her right to live makes you murderers. There is no nice way around that.

Stop.

Stop this wickedness. Stop this madness. Do not deny the unalienable right of the unborn to life. Do not deny the truth of what it means to be "human" and try to redefine it to mean something convenient. The truth is self-evident. It's long past time we acknowledge that, and stop allowing the rights of one people group to supersede the rights of another.