

March 7, 2023

Chairwomen Landwehr and committee members,

My name is Oksana and I support HB 2429.

August of 2022 I hit one of my lowest points in life. I was let go from a job I really enjoyed because I had just found out I was pregnant and was having a really hard first trimester. I was told I wasn't competent enough to be an effective manager under the health conditions the pregnancy was putting me through. What felt like overnight I quickly became homeless, sleeping in my boyfriend's car, eating off the dollar menu at McDonalds with the last paycheck I received from them and showering with a water bottle and sponge. I couldn't see my 2 year old son because I had no place for him to be or even enough money to feed the both of us. I started calling every shelter within a 50 mile radius and all were either full or I didn't meet their program's criteria. Feeling absolutely hopeless, scared, lonely and sad I had one place left to call. Nativity House.

Before making the call I prayed and begged God to help me. I didn't want to bring a baby into a world of uncertainty. When I called Nativity House I was warmly greeted by a young lady in their office. I couldn't help but choke on my tears as I explained my situation. She quickly got my information and said she will talk to the director as soon as she comes back to the office in the following couple of days. My wonderful aunt and her family took me in while I patiently waited for a call back from Nativity House. It didn't take long at all before I got a call to set up and interview. I met with a wonderful lady named Carrie over zoom that following Sunday. I was completely honest with her about my situation, being a recovering alcoholic, and that I came with some baggage because honestly I had nothing to lose at this point. She took no time making up her mind and quickly accepted me into the program. There are no words to describe how I felt at that moment. God had not only answered my prayers but he was showing me he was there and I didn't need to worry.

Moving from one state to another I was scared of the changes to come but had a really open heart and mind. I instantly felt love, care, compassion, support and warmth when I arrived at the house. The home is absolutely beautiful and very homey. I was quickly able to have my son move in also and everyone welcomed the both of us with open arms.

Since being at Nativity House I have not only met several goals I have set for myself but I have learned how to be a better mom and a beautiful woman inside and out. Nativity House gave me a second chance at life and parenting. I've learned skills like budgeting, meal prep, cooking, grocery shopping, housekeeping and so much more.

I was 11 weeks pregnant when I arrived and now I am only days away from bringing a healthy baby boy into the world. I have developed beautiful and healthy relationships with the mentors of Nativity House and 2 of them will be in my birthing room helping me bring the life they saved into this amazing world. Nativity House is a rare and wonderful gift from God I wish every woman in my situation was able to experience. I can't thank them enough for all they have done for me. They truly saved me and my babies.

Please pass HB 2429, so Nativity House can help more women like me.