

My name is Anya Stuart and I am a supporter of the Bill 35-0173: Safe Haven Newborn Protection Act. This act will enable parents to give up their newborn babies to authorized safe locations, such as hospitals or fire stations, without facing legal consequences or abandonment charges. I understand the significance of this act because Family Resource Center Inc. has been offering services to these parents and their newborn. We have seen those parents who are mostly young, frightened and isolated when they delivered their children. They often convey their love for their newborn, but they also realize that they cannot offer them the care and stability they need. This 17-year-old said, "I didn't want to dump him in a trash can or on a doorstep. I wanted him to have a chance at a better life. That's why I decided to take him to a safe haven. It was the most difficult decision of my life, but also the most responsible one. I am thankful that the law protected me from being prosecuted for doing what was best for my child". I hope that this act will help save the lives of innocent babies and give them a future they deserve.

I believe every child deserves a loving home, but not every parent is ready to provide one. That's why I support the Safe Haven Newborn Protection Act, which will allow parents to safely and anonymously surrender their newborns to a hospital, a police station or an emergency services provider, without fear of prosecution or judgment. This law will save lives and prevent tragedies.

A Safe Haven Newborn protection act can save the lives of innocent babies who might otherwise be left in unsafe or unsanitary conditions, such as dumpsters, toilets, or alleys. These babies are at risk of exposure, infection, starvation, or violence. By providing a safe and anonymous option for parents who cannot or do not want to care for their newborns, the act can ensure that these babies are taken to a place where they can receive medical attention and be placed for adoption.

A Safe Haven Newborn protection act can protect the health and well-being of the parents who surrender their babies. Many of these parents are young, poor, or in crisis situations. They may not have access to prenatal care, contraception, or abortion services. They may face stigma, shame, or abuse from their families or communities. They may suffer from mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, or postpartum psychosis. By allowing them to relinquish their babies without fear of prosecution or judgment, the act can reduce the stress and trauma they experience and help them access counseling and support services.

A Safe Haven Newborn protection act can benefit the society as a whole by reducing the social and economic costs associated with infant abandonment and neglect. These costs include the expenses of emergency medical care, foster care, child welfare services, and law enforcement. They also include the long-term effects of child abuse and neglect on the physical, mental, and emotional development of the children who survive. By preventing these negative outcomes, the act can improve the quality of life and well-being of both the children and the parents involved.

In conclusion, a Safe Haven Newborn Protection Act is a necessary and humane measure that can save lives, protect health, and benefit society. The United States Virgin Islands should adopt such an act to provide a safe and legal option for parents who cannot or do not want to raise their newborn babies.