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Each year in the United States, between 25,000 – 32,000 women conceive a child as a result of a convicted rape (Prewitt, 2010). Of these rape-conceived pregnancies between 32.3% - 64% choose to raise their children and an additional 5.9% - 36% choose adoption (Holmes et.al, 1996). As Montana law currently stands the convicted rapist is affording custodial and visitation rights to the child subjecting both the victim and child to additional trauma. The passing of SB 326 would allow Montana to join the 19 other states that have passed similar laws recognizing the need to protect rape victims, their innocent children, and society at large. Further, it would allow victims the necessary freedom to sever ties with one's perpetrator, move forward in the healing process, and parent or adopt out free from the stress of retaliation.

References

- Holmes, Melisa M., Resnick, Heidi, S., Kilpatrick, Dean G., Best, & Connie L. .1996. Rape- related pregnancy: Estimates and descriptive characteristics from a national sample of women. American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Volume 175. Issue 2. Pg 320-325.
- Prewitt, Shauna R. 2010. Giving birth to a "rapist's child": A discussion and analysis of the limited legal protections afforded to women who Become mothers through rape. Georgetown Law Journal. Volume. 98:827 Pg. 827- 862.