

Erika Christensen, a woman whose experience is captured in our report

My husband and I were cautiously excited when we found out I was pregnant due to my previous history with miscarriage. Even as complications mounted throughout the pregnancy, we began to plan for a little boy.

Ultrasounds soon showed the baby's feet were turned inward and his hands were clenched shut. We thought 'Mia Hamm had a clubbed foot,' so it was fixable. And our baby was still growing- an indication that gave us hope.

Around week 30, we discovered his growth had dropped significantly and there was an abundance of amniotic fluid, indicating he couldn't swallow and wouldn't be able to breathe outside the womb. Our doctors explained that, were we to carry to term, I would give birth to a baby who would live a very short time, if at all, before choking to death. We were devastated.

We made the difficult decision to end the pregnancy – for my health and to prevent the baby's suffering. But my doctor told me I couldn't get the abortion in New York, even though our baby couldn't survive. I was now past the legal cut off.

I thought, this is crazy. I can't get care in New York? We live in a supposedly progressive state. We had to spend a fortune and fly thousands of miles to get care in another state. It was awful to have to get on a plane in that moment, to have strangers congratulate me on my pregnancy at the airport, to spend an insane amount of money to get the procedure so far from home.

The cost and travel were a heavy burden for us, but they would be impossible for a lot of people.

So in that sense, I have to consider myself lucky.