

Testimony before the House Health and Human Services Committee  
February 17, 2005

H. B. 2284

Good afternoon Chairman Morrison and members of the committee. My name is Darlene Cornfield, a resident of Valley Center, Kansas. It is my privilege to testify in support of H. B.

I must say that it is disappointing that we need to enact a law to protect an activity that has been the norm for all civilization since the beginning of man. Modern science has manufactured a substitute for mother's milk and now after centuries of feeding our children as women were created to do it is now deemed a taboo or offensive act in public. We as a society have legalized nude dancing, topless waitresses and a myriad of other distasteful practices to some but ask a nursing mother to leave the establishment or be harassed for the conduct.

I myself have been publicly vilified for the practice, cited in the Wichita Eagle, dated July 25, 1992, in an article that was to have been a profile of the candidates for the 90th District House Race entitled "Abortion, Education are Focus in 90th, and I quote" State Representative Darlene Cornfield caused a minor ruckus in the Kansas House last year when she breast-fed her infant son during floor debate. ..." I must say that when I read that I thought to myself, I was there I never saw a ruckus created or any problem at the time. I also wondered what that had to do with issues pertaining to the upcoming election, but all of us here know that the Press cares not about relevancy if they can tarnish the image of someone they do not like. Most of the time I did nurse my son in the ladies lounge, but as you know during veto the votes come quickly and my seat was on the opposite side of the aisle and the smoker's lounge was behind me and the roll would have closed before I would have been able to make it back into the chamber to cast some votes and on occasion had to nurse him on the floor. I was not disruptive or creating any disturbance as evidenced by the picture taken of us one day in the chamber.

Let us restore the dignity of women by enacting this legislation. I would ask you to support this bill to ensure that the right of a woman to nurse her child is protected and viewed as a good and natural conduct not an aberrant behavior.

Thank you. I will stand for questions, Mr. Chairman

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