

TESTIMONY ON HB 2503
Representative Peggy Mast
Tuesday, March 15, 2005

I want to thank the committee for their indulgence once again on a bill that is not a pleasant one to deal with. I regret that this bill had to come before this committee again this year after being heard for the past three years, but the need for this legislation has not changed. As a matter of fact, recent developments have exposed that this issue is one that must be addressed and we must pass this legislation to help prevent future injury to more women and to ensure they have decent health care.

For three years I have proposed that another female be in the room when a woman is examined for pregnancy and when the abortion takes place. For three years, we have heard opposition on this issue even though women have told me of sexual abuse when the examination was performed.

For three years we have tried to obtain enforceable standards for abortion clinics in order to ensure a sanitary environment, and proper health standards were in place. We were finally able to get an inspection on a clinic that had been exposed months before and our greatest fears were confirmed. The condition inside the clinic was outrageous! The staff was untrained, medicine was not properly labeled or stored. Medications that had been expired were found, and perhaps the most disconcerting finding to me was the fact that frozen human tissue was stored next to food items in the freezer. I don't think that Kansans are ready to accept this, yet the Board of Healing Arts made only a token attempt of addressing the problem. I also received recent pictures of the practitioner taking out the medical waste and transporting it to someone else's dumpster on his way home.

I won't belabor this issue. We all know that it needs to be addressed. With that, I stand for questions.