

OPPOSED
SB 528

The Reporting of Statistical Data Regarding Termination of Pregnancies

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee:

It is with some nostalgia that I return to this Committee on which I was honored to serve for six years.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to express to you my concerns regarding SB 528.

I will be brief.

SB 528 reminds me that, sometimes, the more things stay the same, the more they change !

The Kansas Legislature, at least during my twelve years here and *especially* in an election year, has ALWAYS had at least one "feel good" bill designed for no other reason than to tell the folks back home " Look what we're doing to erode the decision women make to have an abortion." SB 528 (as well as the now defunct SB 529 and 530) is simply circa 2006 in this ever perpetuated charade which really, ultimately, is not in our hands. (In my opinion, this entire issue will soon be affirmed or denied by the U.S. Supreme Court. For an era.) SB 528 would require additional, and arguably duplicitous and unnecessary, reporting requirements. The bill would create ambiguities that no one, for or against abortion, has seemingly been able to decipher thereby potentially enacting yet another tool for anti-choice law enforcement to harass medical providers. One example of these required reportings would be for the provider to assess the "disability status" of the pregnant woman. Another would require disclosure of "specific anomalies of the fetus" ... as if anyone could indeed know all of them.

This bill, nor any of its' ilk, should never be allowed to grace the well reasoned and hallowed pages of the Kansas Statutes.

But, Mr.Chair and Members of the Committee, please allow me to detail for you how I *really* feel about this bill ! Specifically, the *change* that this bill represents in what is ordinarily a routine election year "sameness" when it comes to the introduction and promotion of election year "feel good...I'm fighting for you" measures.

In my twelve years of service - 6 in house and 6 in senate - I have yet to experience any matter until now, when longstanding and accustomed practices were not followed in such a blatant matter. As the Ranking member of the Committee, I was not even allowed to listen to and review the tape recording of the Committee hearing during this alleged bill's introduction in order to ascertain whether proper introduction of this bill was followed. In fact, several of the members of the Committee and in the audience that were in attendance (self described as either "Pro Choice" and "Pro Life") did not remember the introduction.

I am appalled that this bill has made it to this point. My point is, over this unsettling twist to an otherwise familiar theme: If this bill is addressing a legitimate need; if this bill is supporting a truly noble cause, then why not proceed based on that proposition and follow proper introduction ? Why create and perpetuate a manner of suspicion if your cause is just...?

The reality is that SB 528 is (1) not necessary, and (2) inherently unequal. It is flimsy, weak, maybe unconstitutional. SB 528 creates just another hurdle and burden for a poor woman. Why should a poor woman have to scrounge up an extra \$25 - that may mean the question between paying her electricity or feeding her family - in order to pay for an emergency pregnancy when on the other side of town a wealthy woman can receive her abortion, with the additional costs of SB 528, without a second thought? It seems to me that our goal should be ensuring equal access for all, despite socioeconomic levels, not widening the gap of inequities.

But that is David Haley's *philosophical basis* for being "Pro Choice..."

But LARGER STILL, I would sincerely hope Mr.Chair, and Members of the Committee, that no matter what you think about abortion or any other controversial issue, that as a Kansas legislator, that you would affirm time tested procedures which bring respect and honor to our legislative process.

I am pleased to stand for questions.

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