

HB 2274 Proponent Testimony

February 20, 2019

Chairwoman Landwehr and Members of the committee,

I am Jeanne Gawdun, Senior Lobbyist with Kansans for Life, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 2274, Abortion Pill Reversal informed consent.

Abortion decisions are driven by a variety of motives, with conflict and ambivalence common. The Kansas legislature has long been committed to providing full and accurate medical information about abortion prior to the decision, which needs to be updated to include timely notice of a chemical reversal option.

There is no acceptable reason that women who begin an abortion pill regimen and change their minds should be denied information about current protocols for abortion pill reversal (APR).

HB 2274 was drafted to empower pregnant women with the knowledge of their true options concerning medication abortions.

MEDICATION ABORTION

In Kansas, nearly 60% of abortions are "medication" abortions using a regimen of two doses of different pills, mifepristone and misoprostol. By state law, the first set is given in the presence of a physician, and the second set is taken at home (K.S.A. 65-4a10).

Increasingly, a significant number of women who have ingested the first set of abortion pills change their mind about using the second set, and have sought abortion pill reversal (APR) to save their baby. According to Pregnancy Help News, as of October 2018, "successful APR has been reported in at least 46 states and 17 countries, including the U.S."

Recent published studies on APR show an approximate 64%-68% success rate in situations where only the first abortion pills are ingested. The fetal abnormality rate after APR is also parallel to those of ordinary pregnancies (see A Case Series Detailing the Successful Reversal of the Effects of Mifepristone Using Progesterone).

BACKGROUND

Supplemental hormones have been used for decades as a bona fide treatment for women struggling with infertility or pregnancies prone to miscarriage. This regimen is covered by insurance (*i.e. pregnancy-related ICD-10 codes: O20.0, E34.9, N94.89*).

However, it is logical that most women obtaining abortion pills are not aware of the role of supplemental hormones assisting pregnancy as would those women who have consulted physicians to overcome infertility and miscarriage to achieve a birth.

The idea of reversing a first-stage medication abortion with the standard regimen used for treating threatened miscarriage was initiated by pro-life Ob/Gyns who were well versed in the efficacy of hormonal supplementation (*see testimony from Dr. Matthew Harrison*).

This can be considered crucial information for some women, but the window for treatment is narrow. Women need to know about APR:

- before abortion, as part of giving full consent;
- inside the facility prior to the procedure, in case of continued ambivalence;
- with paperwork sent home by the abortionist, because the reversal treatment has a short window of time to begin for success.

No matter why women change their minds after beginning an abortion by pills, they deserve all the information normally available to other women receiving medical help in maintaining pregnancy until delivery.

CONTINUITY WITH CURRENT STATUTES

Since 1998, the Kansas State Department of Health and Environment has provided written abortion informed consent materials and a toll-free number to get more information (www.womansrighttoknow.org). Currently, the paper handout has been almost completely supplanted by the use of online information. The abortion appointments are made most often by phone or email and providers have online consent forms that reference the required KDHE "[Women's Right to Know](#)" materials.

The posting of the possibility of reversal about APR aligns with the fact that Kansas abortion facilities already post signage inside that notify

- that the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts regulates doctors and can be contacted with any concerns and complaints; ([K.A.R. 100-22-6](#))
- that women may not be coerced into abortion and that state agencies are able to help and that "You have the right to change your mind at any time prior to the actual abortion and request that the abortion procedure cease ([K.S.A. 65-6709, section \(k\)](#)).

HB 2274 informs and empowers women seeking abortion and I urge the committee to pass it out favorably.

Thank you and I stand for questions.