

First and foremost, the US Constitution and Kansas Constitution allow for privacy and personal autonomy in life decisions, which includes abortion. Our government does not interfere with the private decisions of citizens, such as regarding where they live, where they work, or how many children they have. If Kansas takes away a right of Kansas residents, what right will be on the chopping block next? There is no end to government control over people if you are willing to start down that road.

This autonomy right does not just impact the pregnant person, it impacts the partner and entire family. This bill does not allow for exceptions for rape, incest, health, or life of the mother. This bill would require 8 year olds who have been raped by a family member or trusted adult to continue a pregnancy and give birth. Cancer comes back during pregnancy, and the family has no option except to hope the baby grows faster than the cancer.

Even if the life of the mother is protected, the question comes up: who is to determine on behalf of the government when the life is in sufficient danger to allow an abortion? I have a friend who is now passed away, but who was pregnant in the 1960s before Roe v Wade was passed. The doctor determined they should end the pregnancy due to toxemia. At the time, abortion in Kansas required the agreement of 2 doctors, one pastor and one priest. The doctors and pastor agreed, but the priest would not. He stopped the procedure because it had to be unanimous. Her husband had no say in the health decisions for his wife because the government had usurped that right. Her husband shoved the priest against the wall and said, "If she dies, I'll kill you." She did survive, but I remember her face as she said, "People will say it was the right decision since I didn't die, but they had no right to interfere! We weren't even Catholic, who cares what the priest thought?! They had no right!" And neither does Kansas have that right today.

Note in the story that religions other than Christianity were not represented in the state's authorities. Surely that is another right at risk- the right of freedom of religion to follow a person's own religious beliefs. Christianity itself has many beliefs regarding abortion, and one sect has no right to impose their beliefs on the others just because they have a majority in the legislature per the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

We cannot start chipping away at rights and have the government interfere with personal decisions best left to the families, their faith, and their physician.