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In person PROPONENT TESTIMONY for bill SB 42: AN ACT concerning the department of health and environment; relating to the study and investigation of maternal deaths in the state of Kansas; amending K.S.A 65-177 and repealing the existing section.

To: Kansas Senator Richard Hilderbrand and members of the Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare.

From: Lucrecia Nold, Public Policy Specialist for the Kansas Catholic Conference

Date: January 20, 2022

Chairperson Hilderbrand and members of the Committee,

My name is Lucrecia Nold, and I serve as the Public Policy Specialist for Kansas Catholic Conference, which is the public policy arm of the Catholic Bishops of Kansas. Thank you for the opportunity to provide PROPONENT testimony on bill SB 42. On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Kansas, we offer our support for this bill.

To quote St. Teresa Benedicta (Edith Stein), "To be a mother is to nourish and protect true humanity and bring it to development."

A mother's role in the life of her child is critically important. The mother helps nourish and develop her child's personality, skills, knowledge, mindset and so much more. Her role and responsibility to form her child is critical not only for the child, but to society. Unfortunately, this nourishment necessary for a child's growth, doesn't happen if the mother is deceased.

Pope Francis has stated "A society without mothers would be a dehumanized society, for mothers are always, even in the worst moments, witnesses of tenderness, dedication and moral strength...".

SB 42 is important because it will help standardize the investigation process into why women from minority communities—most particularly from African American communities—are experiencing maternal mortality at tragic and unacceptably high rates. Once we better understand this problem, we can then seek better solutions to address those issues and ultimately create better outcomes that reflect the fundamental value of both women and their babies.

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