

HOUSE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

BILL NUMBER: HCR 5003

Oppose X

Testimony Will Be: Oral

For Meeting on Friday, January 15, 2020

Testimony by: Sandy Brown

On Behalf of: Kansas Abortion Fund

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HRC 5003: House Federal and State Affairs Committee

I am the President of the Kansas Abortion Fund and I am here today to urge members of the joint committees to vote NO on this constitutional amendment that denies the right to reproductive freedom in the Kansas Constitution.

The Kansas Abortion Fund is a non-profit that has provided financial support for over 4700 Kansans to obtain abortion services for the past 20 years. As an affiliate of the National Network of Abortion Funds, we proudly serve and fiercely advocate for our reproductive rights. In our history, we have never, EVER turned down a person in need.

In the past two years alone we have funded 755 women who were unable to afford their abortions. 755 women who couldn't get their procedures paid for even partially through health insurance or Medicaid. 755 people who were only able to exercise their RIGHT over their own bodies until they found financial assistance. They simply didn't have the cash for a \$700 first trimester abortion. They had to pay the rent, feed their kids.

We've watched the government erode our access to reproductive health care over the past decade. The heaviest attack has been on Kansans in crisis who don't have anywhere near the financial means to pay for an abortion or Emergency Contraception. With only 4 clinics in Kansas, pregnant people often have to drive long distances to seek care, find child care while they are gone and miss work. These factors along with

the stress and stigma of abortion make an already difficult situation much more trying.

It is a very heavy burden to bear.

Marginalized Kansans and their families would be hit hardest by this constitutional amendment. Currently, it's lower income folks—often people of color—who frequently can't afford what is theoretically a **right guaranteed to all**. Given the looming prospect of Roe v Wade's hollowing, reversal, or remanding back to the states, the proposed constitutional amendment could end access for those you serve entirely. And you know it would. We will not allow such a future to unfold.

Women will always find a way to terminate their unwanted pregnancies. But we must ensure that abortion remains safe, legal, and accessible.

Decisions about whether to end a pregnancy are deeply personal and should be left to a person in consultation with her healthcare team, family, and perhaps faith—**but never politicians in Topeka**.

Let's be clear—Kansans deserve the right to make their own personal, private medical decisions without a legislator's interference. And our constitutional right to make decisions for our bodies, our lives, and our futures should never be up for a vote.