

Date: March 5, 2024

To: Senator Caryn Tyson, Chair, Senate Assessment and Tax Committee Members of the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

From: Leah A. Conner
Executive Director
Wyandotte Pregnancy Clinic

RE: **ORAL PROPONENT TESTIMONY SB 498** Establishing a tax credit for contributions to eligible charitable organizations operating pregnancy centers or residential maternity facilities and establishing a child tax credit, increasing the tax credit amount for adoption expenses and making the credit refundable and providing a sales tax exemption for pregnancy resource centers and residential maternity facilities.

Madam Chair Tyson and members of the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit my written testimony in support of Senate Bill 498. My name is Leah A. Conner and I serve as Executive Director of the Wyandotte Pregnancy Clinic.

The best way I can demonstrate support for SB 498 is to share a few stories with you.

Recently a young woman arrived at our clinic and informed us that she was from California. She was seeking an abortion. After spending time with our staff, we learned that she had had a previous abortion about one year ago. After further discussion where she learned what support and resources we could provide, she made her own decision to have her baby.

It is important to note that she told us if she had known about a place like the Wyandotte Clinic (when in California) she would not have had her first abortion because there was no visible support for her and her unplanned pregnancy at that time.

Another story. A young woman came to us after calling the abortion pill reversal hotline. She had started the chemical abortion protocol, which is a two-step process. She had taken the first of the two chemicals to abort her baby and then had called us. **Our staff met her almost immediately, it was 9 p.m. and it was a highly emotional consultation.** She informed us that the biological father of her baby was being very unkind. She says she cried all afternoon after taking the abortion chemical until she fell asleep. She told us that when she woke up "she came to her senses." **We began the abortion pill reversal process which was successful in keeping her baby.**

This woman appeared to have a reasonable amount of support and love, but it looked to our staff that the father lacked kindness or compassion and made continuing her pregnancy a real struggle for her. We believe his lack of support contributed to her making another decision with the same pregnancy—she thought she wanted to now have an abortion. This of course was and is her decision.

However, after again speaking with our staff, she informed us that she was now firmly choosing life for herself and her child. We are grateful to be a part of her journey.

It is difficult to say these are “typical” stories because each woman and their situation is different. But I will say that a common theme is that women in unplanned pregnancies feel they have no alternative other than abortion. We will be here for them no matter their decision—before, during and after their pregnancy.

The provisions in this bill for a Kansas income tax credit for donors and the sales tax exemption would help provide pregnancy clinics like ours with the resources we need to be available to the women and their experiences that I have just described.

Thank you in advance for your support of SB 498. We know that in Kansas women have a so-called “right” to abortion. What we seek is to provide them with authentic choices if that is their decision.

Thank you.

Leah A. Conner
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