

# LOUD LIGHT CIVIC ACTION

Melissa Stiehler  
Loud Light Civic Action  
Written Opponent Testimony of HB 2653  
For the House Federal and State Affairs Committee

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Chair Carpenter and members of the Committee,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Melissa Stiehler, and I serve as Advocacy Director of Loud Light Civic Action, a Kansas based, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that supports and builds the civic engagement and leadership of young people in our state. With respect to the Kansas Constitutional Right to personal autonomy and the will of the people of Kansas, Loud Light Civic Action strongly opposes HB 2653.

**If this bill is actually about child support, then it is redundant:**

As cited in proponent testimony for the Senate version of this bill, SB 425, Brittany Jones of Kansas Family Voice says, "...this bill does not mandate any method or modify the courts procedures regarding this in any way. **The court is still allowed to use its discretion in making these determinations.**" If the courts are already using their discretion in establishing paternity and pregnancy expenses regarding child support, then what is the purpose of this bill other than to establish fetal personhood into Kansas law?

**The primary impact of this bill would be establishing dangerous legal statute:**

Fetal personhood laws are about establishing legal precedent that a fetus has more rights than a pregnant person. In the case of HB 2653, this would establish legal personhood from the moment of conception, long before viability, during the zygote phase of development. This bill also redefines abortion in a much more extreme way than in other Kansas law, as an elective procedure unless it is to prevent death. Similar language in other states have caused serious issues in maternal healthcare, because the risk of death is not always certain and because there are other serious medical risks in pregnancy that may not result in death. HB 2653 is not about the wellbeing of a pregnant person; it is a tactic being used to try to break down our constitutional protections.

**This bill ignores the will of the people of Kansas:**

Many members of the legislature concern themselves with the sexual and reproductive health of the citizens of the state. Loud Light Civic Action also values Kansans well being. In this spirit, we remind the legislature of one of the most important lessons on consent: no means no. The people of Kansas spoke loud and clear when they rejected the legislature's constitutional amendment to remove the right to an abortion. We again ask the legislature to respect the will of the people and take no for an answer.

I strongly urge members of this committee to put our free state values into action by opposing HB 2653. Thank you all for your time and I hope you take my testimony into consideration.