



Proponent Testimony on House Bill 2749

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee | March 19, 2024

Chairwoman Gossage and Members of the committee,

I am Jeanne Gawdun, Director of Government Relations with Kansasans for Life. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2749.

Accurate data is necessary for the establishment of policies and programs that truly address the needs of Kansans. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) has collected statistics on abortion submitted from abortion facilities and providers for decades, publishing a report annually (see attachment A).

The report provides insight on a variety of data, such as the number of Kansas women having abortions, the number of women coming to Kansas for abortions from out of state, the age groups of women having the most abortions and the most frequently used abortion methods, to name a few. What the KDHE does not collect, however, is statistics on the reasons women are having abortions.

The most widely used data on the reasons for abortion is the 2004 results from the Guttmacher Institute, an abortion advocacy research organization, which states that, "Understanding women's reasons for having abortions can inform public debate and policy regarding abortion and unwanted pregnancy. Demographic changes over the last two decades highlight the need for a reassessment of why women decide to have abortions."¹

We agree.

But while abortion supporters are happy with the self-serving, selective and non-transparently collected reports from the Guttmacher Institute, legislators should not have to rely on such collections when making serious health policy. As the state's official repository of health statistics, the KDHE is experienced not only with collecting the data but in protecting privacy and confidentiality.

HB 2749 puts into statute several elements of abortion data already required to be collected under the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE) rules and regulations. The questions are asked of patients by their abortion providers as part of the standard medical intake process already taking place, and information on the reasons women choose abortion would be added.

In October 2023, the Society for Family Planning published a study that disclosed abortion numbers for the first six months of the year and were acquired directly from Kansas abortion facilities. It is not unreasonable to require these same facilities to submit reports of abortion statistics to the KDHE twice a year, and that the data be published within 30 days of the end of the reporting period.

HB 2749 will help the general public and policy makers gain a better understanding as to why abortions are performed on women. From there, policies can be crafted to better address the social concerns of women facing such an important decision. A recent study of more than 1,000 American women revealed that of those that had an abortion, 60% of them would have preferred to give birth if they had received more support from others or had more financial security.²

Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully ask the committee to pass out HB 2749 favorably.

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¹ guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2005/reasons-us-women-have-abortions-quantitative-and-qualitative-perspectives

² [Cureus | The Effects of Abortion Decision Rightness and Decision Type on Women's Satisfaction and Mental Health | Article](#)