



**Oral PROPONENT testimony for HB 2429, AN ACT concerning abortion; establishing the alternatives to abortion program and the alternatives to abortion public awareness program; providing services that promote childbirth to women facing unplanned pregnancies; promoting public awareness of such services.**

To: Madam Chair Representative Landwehr and Committee Members

From: Lucrecia Nold, Policy Specialist, Kansas Catholic Conference

Date: March 7, 2023

Madam Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Lucrecia Nold, and I serve as the Policy Specialist for the Kansas Catholic Conference, representing the Catholic Bishops of Kansas. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as a PROPONENT to bill HB 2429.

Sacred Scripture has spoken to us for centuries with the words “Love thy neighbor as thyself” (Mark 12:31). In more recent years we often are told to abide by the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have done unto you”. We are called to help those around us, especially those who need extra love, care, and support.

Pregnancy resource centers (PRCs) and maternity homes excel at providing these essential acts for women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. They welcome all who need their services. With around 3,000 locations within the United States—and about 50 in Kansas—PRC’s and maternity homes operate at the grassroots level in our communities where needs are often hidden.

Pope St. John Paul II acknowledged the vital work and care that these centers provide: *“Newborn life is also served by centers of assistance and homes or centers where new life receives a welcome. Thanks to the work of such centers, many unmarried mothers and couples in difficulty discover new hope and find assistance and support in overcoming hardship and the fear of accepting a newly conceived life.”* (*The Gospel of Life [Evangelium Vitae]*, no. 88)

PRC’s and maternity homes throughout the state of Kansas offer supportive and non-judgmental options for women who find themselves overwhelmed and scared. The services they provide may include ultrasounds, OB/GYN referrals, parenting classes, job training, housing assistance, diapers, formula, and more. These services are provided at no expense to the expecting or new mother and are provided through the generosity of charitable givers.

The need for PRC services is growing even as Kansas is becoming a greater destination for abortion in the Midwest. This is why we are asking the citizens of Kansas to make a nominal investment in the financial support of Pregnancy Resource Centers and Maternity Homes.

As Pope Francis has stated, *“All life has inestimable value even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor...deserve the utmost reverence and respect.”*

Women who have found themselves in a moment of vulnerability, fear, and uncertainty deserve our support and respect. They deserve to know that their fellow Kansans are here to support them. That we love our neighbors as ourselves. This is why the Kansas Catholic Conference offers our support of HB 2429.

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