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Director

## Testimony in Favor of HB 2429

### Establishes the Alternatives to Abortion Program

#### Kansas House Committee on Health and Human Services

Samuel Lee, Director of Campaign Life Missouri – Tuesday, March 7, 2023, 1:30 PM

Based on our experiences with similar legislation in Missouri, we endorse [HB 2429](#), which establishes the Alternatives to Abortion Program and the Alternatives to Abortion Public Awareness Program.

Missouri's Alternatives to Abortion program (A2A) was created by appropriation in 1996 (SFY 1997) **and has continued every year since under four Democratic governors and three Republican.** A2A was later placed into statute in 2007 in [section 188.325](#) (the "Missouri Alternatives to Abortion Services Program") and [section 188.335](#) (the "Missouri Alternatives to Abortion Public Awareness Program").

The state agencies that have overseen A2A over the decades have always contracted with not-for-profit and faith-based organizations to provide the services to pregnant women who are at risk for abortion. **This has reduced the cost to state taxpayers because few – if any – fulltime paid state employees need to be hired to administer the program.** The state's A2A website is <https://dss.mo.gov/fsd/a2a/>.

The not-for-profit and faith-based agencies that provide direct services to women and their children **can keep the costs low to taxpayers** because they are able to use some volunteers and [provide confidential services, free of charge](#) to clients (e.g., [housing; baby and maternity clothes; pregnancy testing; STD testing and treatment; ultrasound; goal setting, tracking and achievement](#); etc.) through other sources of revenue – at no additional cost to the state. **A2A is truly a public/private partnership of life and love.**

In 2015, Missouri lawmakers passed [section 208.067](#) (part of a wide-ranging welfare reform bill), which requires the state to "set aside a minimum of two percent of [TANF] moneys to fund the alternatives to abortion services program under section 188.325 and the alternatives to abortion public awareness program under section 188.335." In Missouri, 2% of TANF is about \$4.3 million annually – which is a funding floor, not a ceiling. Lawmakers are free to appropriate more TANF funds for A2A (which they have). Other sources of funding for A2A have included state funds (general revenue or GR) and \$50,000 in other federal funds (Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant).

In SFY 2023 (state fiscal year from 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023), **appropriations for A2A are \$8,658,561:**

- **\$8,383,561 for "services"** (\$2,033,561 in GR, \$6,300,000 in TANF, and \$50,000 in MCH)
- **\$275,000 for "public awareness"** (all GR)

According to the [Department of Social Services \(DSS\), Family Support Division Book 3 \(pp. 651-661\)](#), DSS projects that **1,400 to 1,500 A2A clients will be served in SFY 2024, with 1,275 to 1,360 program births.** In addition, **DSS reports high client satisfaction** – 4.39 on a 5.00-point scale in SFY 2022. (Satisfaction is measured using a survey given to individuals receiving A2A services, with 5 being "very satisfied" and 1 being "very dissatisfied".) Also, **DSS reports that the program is run efficiently**, with an average monthly cost per client of only \$594 in SFY 2022.