
Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes

Testimony of Katie Baylie (written only)
Director of Legislative Affairs
Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes
Opposing HB 2439
House Health and Human Services
March 20, 2023

Dear Chair and Honorable Committee Members:

Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes (“PPGPV”) is the advocacy and political arm of Planned Parenthood Great Plains. Planned Parenthood Great Plains offers expert, compassionate sexual and reproductive health care to patients, with three health center locations in Kansas. PPGPV submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 2439. HB 2439 would force doctors to provide patients with information regarding medication abortion “reversal” that is medically inaccurate, intrudes on the patient-provider relationship, and could cause physical and mental harm to patients. Bills such as this cause confusion, perpetuate stigma and interfere with both the patients’ decision-making process and the patient-provider relationship.

There is no scientific evidence that proves reversing a medication abortion is possible. Patients seeking health care deserve honest and accurate medical advice. Legislation surrounding health care should be grounded in high quality evidence.

- Medication abortion involves safely and effectively terminating a pregnancy through the combination of two prescription drugs: mifepristone (“RU-486” or “Mifeprex”) and misoprostol (“Cytotec”). Mifepristone works by blocking receptors for progesterone, the hormone which is necessary to maintain pregnancy. Under current practice, the patient takes mifepristone and approximately 24 to 48 hours later, takes misoprostol which causes the uterus to contract and empty its contents.
- Claims that a medication abortion can be “reversed” after a patient takes mifepristone, but prior to taking misoprostol, are based on unsupported information about the effects of progesterone.
- Leading health organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have explicitly stated that claims regarding abortion “reversal” are not based on science and do not meet clinical standards.

HB 2439 would interfere with the patient-provider relationship. The proposed legislation threatens providers with criminal and civil penalties if they do not provide their patients with politically motivated information that is not backed by science. Requiring physicians to tell patients that medication abortion may be reversible undermines the informed consent process.

- Obtaining informed consent from patients is a core principle of medical ethics. The goal of the informed consent process is for patients to have all the necessary, medically accurate information necessary to make the right decision for themselves.
- HB 2439, and laws like it, undermines this process by requiring providers to give patients information that mifepristone can be reversed, without scientific evidence to back this claim up.
- Providers have a duty to provide their patients with information that is medically sound; this legislation puts providers in an untenable situation where they would have to determine whether to warn their patients of known or suspected sources of misinformation in accordance with their professional duty, while adhering to the requirement to put this information and sources in notices to the patient.
- Threatening providers with both civil and criminal penalties directly intrudes on the provider-patient relationship and the duty of providers to inform patients of reliable information regarding their health care decisions.
- Abortion is an essential part of comprehensive medical care. A patient's decision to terminate a pregnancy in consultation with their trusted medical professional should not be interfered with by politicians.

HB 2439 would require both Kansas Department of Health and Environment ("KDHE"), pharmacies and medical facilities to provide information and "resources" to patients about where they may obtain "timely assistance to attempt to reverse [a] medication abortion". The state-sanctioned promotion of abortion misinformation misleads the public and compromises the integrity of the department and pharmacies and facilities.

- State departments of health, medical facilities and pharmacies should be trusted sources of public health information. This legislation would require the trusted entities to promote political propaganda which is not backed by science.
- The proposed legislation does not contain any standards nor criteria to evaluate what information must be posted on KDHE's website or a vetting process to ensure the provided resources are legitimate and safe for patients. The ambiguities in the proposed legislation and lack of standards will create confusion among patients, providers and regulators.
- This legislation has the potential to harm patients who are seeking medically accurate information from trusted sources such as KDHE or medical facilities by directing them to unreliable, unvetted sources.

Patients deserve to be given medically accurate information and to be able to make their own decisions regarding their health. There is no scientific evidence that medication abortion "reversal" is effective or safe for patients. **PPGPV respectfully urges the committee to vote no on this legislation.**