



Testimony in Support of H.B. 2635
House Federal & State Affairs Committee
Kansas Family Voice
Brittany Jones

Chairman Kessler and members of the Committee, my name is Brittany Jones, and I am an attorney and President of Kansas Family Voice. We support pregnancy resource centers who collectively provide care and resources for women all across the state. We believe that H.B. 2635 is vital to ensuring that these centers can continue their important work as they walk alongside women often in very difficult situations.

H.B. 2635 is the CARE Act and its major purpose is to protect pregnancy resource centers from censorship and malicious investigations simply because of these centers' pro-life views. Centers have been attacked in multiple other states and the CARE Act would ensure protection from attacks from municipal governments and state actors.

It prohibits state and local government officials from:

- Forcing pregnancy centers to provide abortions or abortion drugs;
- Demanding that pregnancy centers provide referrals for or counsel women in favor of abortion;
- Coercing pregnancy centers to post ads, flyers, or other materials promoting abortion or informing women how to obtain abortions;
- Silencing pregnancy centers from providing counseling or offering care and material resources to pregnant women and their families;
- Censoring pregnancy centers from informing women about abortion pill reversal;
- Requiring pregnancy centers to hire employees who do not share the organization's pro-life ethic and beliefs.

Pregnancy centers do life-affirming work all across our state ensuring mothers and fathers have the resources and information they need to make a truly informed choice. Each center provides different services based on the community they serve and their staffing. Some provide actual medical services and have qualified licensed personnel. Others provide clothes, diapers, and connections to other resources.

Attacks on pregnancy centers are growing nationwide.¹ These attacks are not just coming from private citizens but in many states from the government. A multitude of

¹ See e.g., Justice Dep't, Press Release: Three Defendants Plead Guilty to a Civil Rights Conspiracy Targeting Pregnancy Resource Centers (June 14, 2024) <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/three-defendants-plead-guilty-civil-rights-conspiracy-targeting-pregnancy-resource-centers>; Kristen Mirand, Blue Ridge Pregnancy Center boarded up after vandalism (June 27, 2022) <https://wset.com/news/local/graffiti-gone-windows-boarded-up-vandalism-blue-ridge-pregnancy-center-lynchburg-virginia-abortion-roe-v-wade-pro-live-reproductive-rights-controversy-scotus-supreme-court-decision-june-27-2022>; <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/22/vandals-attack-two-michigan-pro-life-pregnancy-cen/>;



state and local governments have sought to undermine the fundamental rights of pregnancy centers.² The CARE Act will help ensure that pregnancy centers don't face lengthy and expensive lawsuits.

When California tried to mandate that pregnancy centers post messages about abortion, the Supreme Court ruled that this violated the First Amendment.³ It compelled speech by requiring centers to promote abortion services. This

Further, many of these centers serve mothers and fathers for explicitly religious reasons. Their faith compels them to care for these families. These types of government regulations other states have tried to impose interfere with the religious purpose of these centers.

Kansas should take proactive steps to ensure these valuable centers are protected from attempts to compel them to speak or try to stop them from caring for women. H.B. 2635 serves an important purpose of giving these ministries the confidence they need that our state will support them. We ask that you report H.B. 2635 favorably for passage.

Thank you!

² See *e.g.*, Ill. H.B. 2463 (2023); Conn. S.B. 835 (2021); NJ S.B. 3545 (2023).

³ *Nat'l Inst. of Family & Life Advocates v. Becerra*, 585 U.S. 755 (2018).