

Written Testimony in Support of HB 2635

To: Chair Representative Kessler and Members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

From: Terry Mears, Executive Director, Branches Pregnancy and Family Centers, El Dorado & Augusta, Kansas

Position: Proponent of HB 2635

Contact: terry@hope4kansas.com

Dear Chair Representative Kessler and members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2635, the Pregnancy Center Autonomy and Rights of Expression Act.

I serve as the Executive Director of Branches Pregnancy and Family Centers, in the communities of El Dorado and Augusta, Kansas. I am honored to lead a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who make it possible to offer life-affirming resources to those we serve. Our team provides pregnancy verifications, early pregnancy ultrasounds to confirm viability and gestational age, along with education, support, and compassionate care to women and families facing unplanned pregnancies.

Over the past two years as Executive Director, I have brought a different perspective to this mission. While I spent much of my career as a marketing executive, my calling has always included serving in missions that protected women from abuse, supported men who needed a hand up, and equipped foster families who lacked the resources to care for vulnerable children.

When Branches reached a crossroads, I made the decision to shut down a business I was operating in Houston, Texas, relocate to Kansas, and take on the work of rebuilding what was once a thriving pregnancy center. This mission mattered that much to me. I brought my professional experience and applied strategic principles to help rebuild and strengthen two centers that not only support women—and men—facing unplanned pregnancies, but also connect families to resources that help break cycles of generational hardship.

The fight for life has changed, and we are responding with a renewed focus on the most abortion-vulnerable generation in history. At the same time, we provide compassionate support for women who have experienced abortion and are seeking healing and a different path forward.

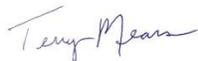
HB 2635 is critical to ensuring pregnancy centers like ours can continue providing life-affirming care, support, and resources with integrity. It protects centers from being compelled to communicate or refer in ways that conflict with their mission. Although Kansas has been spared much of the government overreach seen in other states, this bill offers proactive protection so pregnancy centers can continue serving women and families faithfully and effectively.

Our clients often find our centers through a simple internet search during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. They come seeking accurate information, compassionate care, and practical support, as well as a safe and confidential environment in which they can openly share their fears, concerns, and uncertainties without judgment, pressure, or coercion.

Pregnancy centers like ours exist to meet women and families where they are, offering care that is relational, ethical, and mission-driven. This legislation protects our ability to provide those services in a manner that is fully consistent with our mission, values, and purpose, ensuring we can continue serving women and families with integrity and trust.

I respectfully ask you to support HB 2635 and the protections it offers to pregnancy centers throughout Kansas.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your consideration of this legislation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terry Mears".

Terry Mears
Executive Director
Branches Pregnancy and Family Centers