



TESTIMONY

Concerned Women for America of Kansas

HB 2523

February 15, 2012

Chairman Kinzer and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Concerned Women for America of Kansas stands in favor of HB 2523. CWA has long supported the conscience rights of medical professionals, and we feel this bill is an important step in protecting the rights of those medical personnel who have sincerely-held beliefs about the ending of human life in medical procedures with devices that cause the termination of a pregnancy and those drugs which they reasonably believe will result in the termination of a pregnancy.

Despite the vigorous assurances to the contrary, recent moves by the President and Secretary of HHS Kathleen Sebelius to mandate that religious institutions cover contraceptives and drugs which can end a pregnancy testify to the medical profession that their long-held protection of the right of conscience is about to be overturned by federal fiat. This is happening in spite of the U.S. Constitution which guarantees the right of free exercise of religion. Because of the federal incursion into the health care decisions of all Americans, CWA of Kansas believes this bill is necessary to protect those people, most of whom are in the profession to help not harm human life, from a government that is ignoring the rights of American citizens.

As a pharmacist, (inactive; registered in Indiana) I am especially interested in protecting those rights long held in modern medicine. I could not, in good conscience, dispense the so-called "morning after" pills---Plan B and EllaOne to a patient who presented a prescription to me. There would be several reasons for my decision:

- Both drugs inhibit progesterone, the hormone that is responsible for creating a hospitable environment for a developing baby in the womb. They prevent implantation of an-already-fertilized zygote (a distinct new human being) that only has to develop and grow before it emerges into the world.
- EllaOne is similar in chemical composition to RU-486 the drug known as the abortion drug. It can delay ovulation or prevent implantation. The manufacturer states it can be used up to five days after intercourse, so depending on the timing of taking the drug, it can act as an abortifacient by interfering with implantation. Without implantation the embryo dies from malnutrition---in effect, a mini-abortion.
- The FDA Advisory Committee in reviewing whether or not to allow the drug to be on the market admitted that the drug's "five day window" made it imperative that it do more than just stop ovulation. However, the panel voted not to advise women of this fact.
- Despite the fact that RU-486, the chemical precursor of EllaOne, has been associated with deaths from sepsis, misuse of protocol prescribed by the FDA and women's subsequent hospitalizations from blood loss, no one seemed to think that EllaOne would cause those same problems even though it is so closely related chemically. Thus it was thrust upon the market as yet another "choice" for women.
- EllaOne has not been thoroughly studied as to whether or not it is teratogenic (produces birth defects) in cases where the developing embryo survives the chemical assault.
- Since a woman takes this and other "emergency contraception" at home, any adverse reactions would be unreported and possibly untreated. There is no reporting mechanism for adverse reactions or complications.

Recently it was reported that a college in Pennsylvania is selling Plan B from a vending machine because “the students wanted it.” Think of the myriad complications that could occur with multiple uses of these drugs. Of course, Plan B has circumvented the conscience and health concerns of medical personnel by being classified as an “over-the-counter” drug.

- The informed consent issue is a big one---the women who think it merely stops her from ovulating is not getting the full truth about what she will be ingesting.
- Recently the International Agency on Research of Cancer (2005) listed oral contraceptives as a Group I carcinogen for breast, cervical and liver cancer. The so-called morning-after pill Plan B is a massive dose of an oral contraceptive. I could not in good conscience supply a woman with something that could act as a “chemical time-bomb” that would later induce cancer.

The drugs that are used to prevent or end a pregnancy are potent chemicals that in some cases have been poorly studied and researched even if used according to FDA protocols. They are used without medical supervision or follow-up.

As a conscientious pharmacist, I could not knowingly give someone a drug that I know could harm them and quite likely could take another human life. Pharmacists, doctors, nurse and other medical personnel should not be penalized for exercising the time-honored phrase in the Hippocratic Oath---“do no harm”.

Judy Smith

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