Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 527

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee | March 19, 2024

Chairman Thompson and Members of the committee,

SB 527 creates the crime of unlawful coercion to compel a woman to have an abortion that she does not want. The bill provides various penalties for abortion coercion, including enhanced penalties for criminal acts committed with the intent to coerce a woman to have an abortion.

Abortion advocates tell the public that women who get abortions do not regret them, citing the 2015 Turnaway Study. Produced by pro-abortion researchers, that study has been the basis of dozens of peer-reviewed publications, as well as hundreds of news stories and opinion pieces.[1]

However, a recent study of more than 1,000 American women revealed that of the women who reported having had abortions, for two-thirds of them the abortion was unwanted, coerced, or otherwise inconsistent with their own values and preferences.[2] For too many women, the "right to choose" abortion has become a "duty" to have an abortion for the benefit of other people.

Pressure often rises to the level of coercion as housing, career and educational opportunities, and other financial support are used as leverage to force women to abort. Abortion coercion tactics may even escalate into harassment and threats of physical harm. Human trafficking and child sexual abuse are also situations that can lead to coerced abortions.

SB 527 will give women who are facing coercion to have an abortion the legal backing they need and is an additional tool for prosecutors to seek justice for these women.

Currently, around 20 states have laws against abortion coercion. Abortion coercion is not only becoming increasingly common across the country,[3] but is happening right here in Kansas.[4]

For those who believe abortion should be a "woman's choice," I ask you to join us in support of SB 527 to ensure that it truly is her choice and not someone else's.

Thank you for your consideration. I respectfully ask that the committee pass SB 527 out favorably.

Jeanne Gawdun
KFL Director of Government Relations
785-234-2998 | jeanne@kfl.org

---

[1] https://aul.org/2024/02/01/the-overlooked-findings-of-the-turnaway-study/
[2] Cureus | The Effects of Abortion Decision Rightness and Decision Type on Women's Satisfaction and Mental Health | Article
[3] https://www.nrlc.org/nrlnewstoday/2022/08/coerced-abortion-its-far-more-common-than-you-think/
[4] https://www.ksnt.com/news/kansas-man-gets-nearly-10-years-in-prison-in-fetus-death/