

SB 5

Proponent Testimony

Written Only

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Senate District 3

Madam Chair Gossage, Vice Chair Erickson, and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak out on an issue that has great relevance for every person in our state. I understand that the committee is contemplating a bill that will prevent chemical abortion drugs from being prescribed through Telehealth channels. I also understand that this ban would extend in the event of a declared emergency so that the governor, whoever they might be at the time, would not have the power to lift this ban. I am for SB 5.

Chemical abortion drugs have been in the news lately. There is at least one lawsuit against the FDA over chemical abortion pills as their danger to girls and women become known. A white paper entitled Study Shows Long Term Negative Impact of Medication Abortion found one-third of women suffer severe emotional trauma upon use, and the risk of women ending up in the emergency room afterwards has increased by 500%. This study was commissioned by the group Support After Abortion and conducted by Shapard Research out of Oklahoma City in 2022. Other findings are equally disturbing. However, there is a deeper problem with abortion.

The issue of abortion has been dividing society for generations. To some extent, we have fallen victim to semantics, but this is a distinction with a very profound difference—do humans have value or are they the source of value? I believe we have chosen the former definition and the result has been that we have disrupted the very foundation of law and society. When people are the arbiters of value, they have the ability to decide what things to value more and what things to value less.

It would be contrary to any legal system which purports to protect and enforce a just social order to legalize killing which rests for its justification on the belief that *certain* lives lack worth. In order to have a society capable of justice, there must be a non-arbitrary and non-discriminatory way of identifying who are the subjects of justice. But the only way of avoiding arbitrariness in identifying the subjects of justice is to assume that *all* human beings are entitled to be treated justly and are the subjects of certain basic human rights by virtue of being human. Human rights and a just society are not possible unless our value is tied to our humanness. In contrast, when people are acknowledged to be the *sources* of value, they are forced to acknowledge the presence of life as worthy of respect and even reverence. If they do not, they will take away their own claim to 'justice' or 'rights'. Without respect for life, those concepts have no meaning.

Abortion is a type of killing which cannot be accommodated in a legal system for which belief in basic human rights is foundational. Abortion is killing the innocent. Is not the fundamental task of civil authority to protect the innocent? But if the claim that a baby lacks a worthwhile life is held to make killing lawful, then the state has ceased to recognize the innocent as having binding claims to protection. If the state treats these claims as null, then what claim has it to that authority which derives precisely from the need of citizens for any protection? I would hope that Kansas would uphold a just society by our support of SB 5. If they choose not to, their foundation of authority, resting on protection of the innocent, is gone.