Paul Brink

Written Testimony

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee

SB 95

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My name is Paul Brink, and I am a Student at Wichita State University. I am a lifelong Kansan, a husband, a brother, a son, and a taxpayer. I am very interested in our state, and in the people that live here. As such, I am deeply concerned with this bill that has been brought to this Committee. I find it to be an unnecessarily restrictive measure designed specifically to reduce access to a vital health care service. I also find it to be a fiscally irresponsible proposal. I would like to ask this Committee to cease consideration of this bill, so that we may spend our limited and valuable time on proposals that can improve the lives of the people of Kansas.

First, I would like to state that access to abortion services is a necessary and vital part of reproductive health care and health care in general. It is a legal and constitutionally protected right to have access to this service. This bill is in violation of this principle, and it will disproportionately affect low income and rural women. With only three clinics in the state that offer abortion services, limiting the amount of time a person has to access such a service can have the effect of preventing that person from having the ability to seek the health care they need.

After having spoken with several legislators that represent various parts of Kansas, I have often heard the philosophy that the role of government is not to be involved in our everyday life. Our legislature should not be in the business of involving themselves with the personal decisions individuals make. Reproductive health care decisions are among the most personal decisions anyone can make, and we should be allowing women the ability to make these important decisions with medical professionals.

Our state is also in a difficult financial position. With cuts looming to several departments of our state government, we should be very concerned with the financial consequences each of our decisions will have. Our state has already spent a very large amount of money defending previous laws relating to reproductive health care that are unconstitutional. Looking at current legal precedent, this law is clearly unconstitutional. Even if passing it would send a message about the intentions of our legislators, it would have a significant negative impact on the state budget.

Regardless of anyone's personal position on abortion, it should be clear to this committee that this proposal would only have a negative impact on our state. Not only would it have the effect of unnecessarily restricting people's health care access, but it would also be a poor financial decision for the state's budget. As a taxpayer, I am concerned about measures that are harmful to the state and its people. As such, I must ask that this committee refuse to consider this bill any further, and instead focus on measures that can have a positive impact on the lives of Kansans.