

January 11, 2018

RE: HB 2343

Committee on Public Health and Welfare and Committee

To the honorable Senator Vicki Schmidt:

I am a family nurse practitioner that works in a large medical center. In that role I am intimately involved in the care of adults with Down syndrome (DS) in the state of Kansas. I provide primary care for this population and deal with many issues that affect them and their families.

The adults that I work with are wonderful folks. They add to my life and to their families' lives in multiple ways. The average lifespan of an adult with DS today is 61 years. That number increases annually. They are living lives independently, have jobs and significant others. They are attending college programs all over the state. Many are extremely healthy. They may take medicine daily for a variety of health issues but so do I. No one questions whether or not I would be suitable to receive an organ transplant if that would become necessary. I currently have a patient who transferred her care here from another state and she is the recipient of a kidney transplant. She takes care of herself independently and is a healthy young lady.

The people of Kansas have long been supporters of the sanctity of life. That belief does not change dependent on the sex of the fetus, or the chromosomal makeup of the unborn. Why should that same belief that a life is worth saving change for the organ transplant? These adults are worthwhile people and if they need an organ transplant who are we to decide if their disability makes them less qualified than someone else?

The HB 2343 states only that which is held in high esteem in the state- that any one regardless of their intellectual disability can be given full and proper consideration for medical treatments, including organ transplants. This is our belief about the sanctity of life being actualized.

On behalf of all of my patients and their families, I ask that you support HB 2343 so that my patients can know, without a doubt, that their life is valued by the state and its constituents.

Sincerely,

Moya Peterson, PhD, APRN