

From: The National Council of Jewish Women, Kansas City Section
Overland Park, Kansas

To: Special Committee on Federal and State Affairs
Hearing Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2020
Room: 346-S

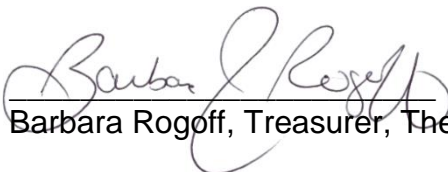
Topic: HCR 5019
Written Testimony Only

The National Council of Jewish Women has represented the interests of the Jewish communities of Kansas in matters of public policy since 1893. We are a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates who turn progressive ideas into action. We strive for social justice by improving the quality of life for women, children and families by safeguarding individual rights and freedoms.

NCJW, Kansas City Section strongly opposes HCR 5019 on the grounds that it would prohibit members of the Jewish and other affected faith communities from making reproductive health decisions in accordance with their faith's tenets, in violation of the separation of church and state.

There is broad consensus in the Jewish community prioritizing the life of the mother over that of a fetus, making abortion permissible when the mother's life is at stake. Some Orthodox Jewish people, in addition to Conservative and Reform Jews, also consider rape, incest or the mother's physical health as other reasons for permitting an abortion. Thus, even under the strictest interpretation of Jewish law, there are circumstances that would justify an abortion. Therefore, HCR 5019 would prohibit reproductive health decision-making in accordance with Jewish law.

America was founded on the premise of religious freedom and pluralism with the separation of church and state as a core doctrine. National Council of Jewish Women, Kansas City Section strongly urges you, as our elected representatives, to refrain from infringing upon citizens' rights to practice their faith by rejecting HCR 5019, thereby permitting individuals to make their reproductive health decisions based upon the advice of family and health care providers and the tenets of their faith.



Barbara Rogoff, Treasurer, The National Council of Jewish Women, Kansas City Section

Date: January 16, 2020