

**Testimony of Haley Shores
Opposing SCR 1613/HCR 5019
Joint House Federal and State Affairs and
Senate Judiciary Committees
January 21, 2020**

I request that members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee vote no on the constitutional amendment HCR 5019/SCR 1613 that limits access to reproductive health care. Kansans deserve to determine their future on their own terms. Our state should not increase government interference of our own personal, private health care decisions. This dangerous and flawed amendment puts thousands of Kansas' women at risk.

I have personally worked with Kansans on this issue for the past five years. I have traveled the state, hearing their stories and listening to their struggles. The reasons Kansans seek abortion care vary, but every decision is deeply personal. What keeps me up at night are the stories I have heard of Kansans who did not have access to abortion care.

There are countless stories from women in my life, others I have met who needed abortion care, and the multitudes of data points on to how restrictions on abortion lead to higher maternal and infant mortality rates, etc.-- but I thought I would take this moment to tell you about my mother, and how she wouldn't be here today without a life-saving medical procedure: abortion.

My mother suffers from a rare form of Muscular Dystrophy called late-onset Glycogen Storage Disease Type II. This is caused by mutations in a gene which have instructions to produce the enzyme acid maltase, resulting in an accumulation of glycogen in muscle tissue, greatly impairing their function. It is a progressive, devastating disease that I know will take my mother's life sooner rather than later.

My mother always wanted a house full of kids. She has told me many times that she knows God put her on this earth to be a mother. But after her diagnosis it became more difficult to have a child. And then she became pregnant, one of the happiest moments of her life. A few happy months went by, and then doctors gave her terrible, heartbreaking news. If she gave birth, she and her much loved child would not survive. Abortion was the kindest decision my mother and her medical team could make.

Because of my mother's story, I stand firm in believing that all Kansans deserve a right to bodily autonomy, and to make their own decisions.

Decisions about ending a pregnancy are deeply personal for a woman. Her health care team, family and faith leaders are where she should seek consultation and advice, not legislators whom she may never meet in Topeka and who cannot evaluate the individual circumstance.

It is because of my mother-- her resilience, her strength, and her love--that I ask you to vote no on SCR 1613/HCR 5019.