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Special Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Hearing Date: January 21, 2020

Room: 346-S

Topic: HCR 5019

Opponent

Written Testimony Only

The movement I was raised and ordained in, Reform Judaism, is a movement comprising over a third of United States' Jews. Our movement has long been on record as strongly supporting keeping abortion legal. We believe that the right to decide on an abortion needs to be left to a woman to make. For us, this is a strongly-held religious belief.

Judaism has always held that the rights and needs of the mother takes precedence over any rights of the fetus. Her mental health and physical health are the first priority.

I personally remember a mother in one of my congregations who chose to abort her fetus because she (the mother) had cancer. Had the mother been required to carry this fetus to full term, she might well have died. Instead, her cancer was treated, and she went on to have another child and live a long life herself. This is just one of many, many real world examples that show how vital it is to keep abortion safe and legal.

Within American society there is a wide range of perspective on abortion. I take great offense at some in the legislature who want to take their own fundamentalist religious perspective on this issue and force it on the rest of us. If you make abortion illegal you will force women to resort to unsafe, illegal abortions again. That would indeed be a terrible tragedy.

I hope you will do the right thing and let mothers decide for themselves what their needs are.

Rabbi Debbie Stiel

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