

Testimony of Sandy Brown
Director, Kansas Abortion Fund
Opposing SCR 1613/HCR 5019
Joint House Federal and State Affairs and Senate
Judiciary Committees
January 21, 2020



The Kansas Abortion Fund requests 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 denies the right to reproductive freedom in the Kansas Constitution.

The Kansas Abortion Fund is a nonprofit that has supported Kansans in need of financial support to obtain abortion services since 1996. We are the last resort for financial assistance to Kansans seeking abortion services. The Kansas Abortion Fund is part of the National Network of Abortion Funds, which includes 70 funds across the nation.

The fund has watched options for reproductive health care erode through government action, particularly over the past decade. The heaviest attack has been on people in crisis who don't have the financial means to pay for an abortion or emergency contraception. Since there are only four clinics in Kansas, pregnant people often have to drive long distances to seek care. An overnight stay in a hotel and finding child care is necessary in many cases. Work is often missed. These factors along with financial stress and stigma against abortion make an already difficult situation much more trying. Restrictions on abortion have increased the number of Kansans we serve; we have never turned down a person in need. In 2019, we helped more than 420 Kansans, a 25% increase over 2018.

The Kansans we serve and their families will be hit first and hardest by HCR 5019/SCR 1613. Currently, low income people—often people of color due to structural racism—frequently cannot afford what is theoretically a right guaranteed to all. Given the looming prospect of *Roe v. Wade's* hollowing, reversal, or remanding back to the states, the proposed constitutional amendment will end access for those we serve entirely. For the low-income Kansans we support every day, this amendment would be a ban. We are committed to not allowing such a future to unfold.

Decisions about whether to end a pregnancy are deeply personal and should be left to a woman in consultation with her health care provider, her family, and her faith—not politicians in Topeka. Kansans deserve the right to make our own personal, private medical decisions without politicians' interference. And our constitutional right to make decisions for our bodies, our lives, and our futures should never be up for a vote.