

January 16, 2020

To the Members of the House Federal and State Affairs and Senate Judiciary Committees,

I ask you to vote no on the constitutional amendment HCR 5019/SCR 1613 that denies the right to reproductive freedom in the Kansas Constitution.

I firmly believe that there should be a constitutional right to abortion. The decision to have an abortion is literally a life-altering one--I don't just mean for the possible child, but for the person who will undergo drastic physical, hormonal, financial, social, etc. changes as a result of pregnancy and birth--and that kind of decision should be made by the person considering an abortion, not the elected members of the legislature of the state of Kansas. This amendment takes away rights from women in the Kansas Constitution. Even if we all don't agree on abortion, we should agree that it is a personal, private medical decision made by a person, their family, their faith, and their doctor.

My mother considered having an abortion when she found out she was pregnant with me. It was an accident, the result of an impetuous decision. Even though I am quite happy to be alive, if I could reach back across time and talk to her, I would support her right to choose. She knew she could not support a child the way she wanted to at the time--a single mother enlisted in the lower ranks of the military, stationed abroad--even though she would love her baby, even though she believed it would be a sin according to her faith. It was after discussions with her mother, that she decided to continue with the pregnancy. My grandmother decided to give up her life and move to be with us to be my caretaker and help my mother.

You see, I needed more than love in the situation I was being born into, and my mother made sure I would have what I needed before deciding to continue the pregnancy. I think my mother did the right thing--not because she chose to have me, but because she only chose to have me when she figured out if she could support me in all the ways that a child needs support. I think a woman should have the right to her own body and what happens to it--to her life and what happens to it--and she needs to be able to make decisions about her body and her life based on her values, her situation, her family, her medical needs, etc. and not have a decision arbitrarily forced upon her by the law.

Sincerely,
Mischa Buckler
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