

January 17, 2020

Chairman Barker, Vice Chairman Averkamp, and honorable members of the Kansas House Federal and State Affairs Committee:

I am writing to you to testify in opposition to H.C.R. 5019.

The Bill of Rights to our Kansas Constitution affords all citizens of the State of Kansas protection of the right of personal autonomy. This fundamental right affords each Kansan the right to control their own body, to assert their own bodily integrity, and to exercise self-determination.

Notably, H.C.R. 5019 does not seek to amend Section 1 of the Kansas Constitution Bill of Rights to state that Kansans are no longer entitled to the natural, inalienable right of personal autonomy. Rather, it seeks to create two separate classes of Kansas citizens. In a post-amendment world, men in Kansas will continue to be fully afforded their fundamental right of personal autonomy, while women in Kansas will not.

Moreover, this proposed constitutional amendment, as drafted, risks undermining the professional medical opinions of women's trusted physicians. It would allow for and embolden the Kansas Legislature to take further legislative action to undermine the sacrosanct doctor-patient relationship and prohibit doctors from saving the lives of their pregnant patients.

I encourage you to maintain our constitutional status quo in which the right of personal autonomy is fundamental, but not absolute, and where accordingly the State may restrict this right if it is doing so to further a compelling government interest in a way that is narrowly tailored to that interest.

The proposed "Value Them Both Amendment" undercuts the constitutional, fundamental right of personal autonomy for roughly half of Kansans - demonstrating that, in actuality, it values no one. I respectfully encourage you to oppose H.C.R. 5019 and maintain women's fundamental right of personal autonomy, as men will continue to be afforded in our state.

Sincerely,

Solana Flora
Mission, KS