



February 13, 2024

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present opponent testimony on HB 2749. Trust Women Foundation is a health care provider in Kansas and Oklahoma with a mission to provide and protect access to abortion care for our communities. We offer comprehensive reproductive health care, as well as gender-affirming care, HIV treatment, HEP-C testing and treatment and other sexual health services. We stand in strong opposition to House Bill 2749. We are deeply concerned with the bill's potential to create severe government overreach, confusing and stigmatizing experiences for our patients, and the almost-certain squandering of resources that could otherwise support state programs that directly benefit struggling families.

HB 2749 is constitutionally problematic and would create an unnecessary burden in the normal provision of abortion care. While broad questions relating to demographics and general medical concerns may be appropriate in most clinical settings, the interrogation proposed in HB 2749 is a litany of invasive and medically unnecessary questions.

The right to abortion in our state constitution is like our right to freedom of speech: the only reason needed to have an abortion is that it is our right to have abortions—beyond that, we only need to ensure that the information we request from our patients is both relevant and necessary. Most Kansans would scoff at being asked to justify their speech if presented with a similar list of questions, and rightly so. Questions about a patient's financial and domestic circumstances are not germane to the care they receive in our clinic. Whether they pay for their procedure with their own money or through financial support provided by an abortion fund has no bearing on the quality of care they receive, or the expected outcomes.

From the standpoint of our providers, the line of questioning in the bill would be more appropriate in a survey environment, rather than a clinical context where a patient may misunderstand the questions as pertinent to their care. The Guttmacher Institute, a leading abortion research organization, conducted a large-scale study of abortion patients in 2005 that asked many of the same types of questions as appear in HB 2749, but in the context of an opt-in survey given to patients, and no identifying information of the patient or provider was included. This is a more appropriate method for collecting this information. It is unclear why biannual reporting is more effective than the current annual reporting.



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What will this information be used in support of, and how will this benefit Kansas families? Due to regional abortion bans—especially those bans in Oklahoma and Texas--most providers in the state are also seeing a majority of out-of-state patients. How will their information be used? What safeguards are there to ensure that this information won't be used against patients, or in service of additional bans or unconstitutional restrictions on reproductive health care? What is happening with the data that KDHE currently collects, and how will biannual collection enhance that evaluation?

Rather than subject patients to irrelevant and invasive interrogations during a medical visit, the legislature could bring attention and resources to a number of programs that would directly benefit our communities:

- Support birthing centers,
- Remove barriers to contraception access, including emergency contraception,
- Support expanded access to doula and midwifery care by integrating midwives into maternity care and removing restrictive laws and regulations,
- Pass HB 2750 - Permitting the use of expedited partner therapy to treat a sexually transmitted disease.
- Advocate for equitable maternal health care that ensures pregnant people can give birth in a supportive environment and have health coverage to ensure they can afford their care,
- Increase Medicaid reimbursement for abortion and other key sexual and reproductive health care services to improve access equity and health outcomes.

Overall, the Trust Women Foundation opposes the passage of HB2749, and we encourage thoughtful consideration of the above factors when evaluating the proposed legislation.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide these written and oral comments. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Respectfully,  
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