

Tuesday, March 12, 2024, 9:00 AM
House Committee on Federal and State Affairs
Rep. Will Carpenter, Chair
Opponent Testimony, Written
HB 2809 – Creating the every mom matters act

Chair Carpenter and Members of the Committee,

I'm reaching out today to express my strong opposition to HB2809, as it poses a significant threat to public health and the well-being of individuals and families across our state. This bill, which seeks to funnel public funds into programs and organizations that do not provide comprehensive evidence-based information on birth control options, undermines the fundamental principles of public health and risks harming vulnerable populations.

One of the most concerning aspects of HB2809 is its diversion of public funds to organizations that do not offer comprehensive, evidence-based information on birth control. Access to accurate and unbiased information about contraception is essential for individuals and families to make informed decisions about their reproductive health. By funneling public funds into organizations that may withhold or provide inaccurate information about birth control, this bill jeopardizes the health and well-being of our communities.

Furthermore, providing comprehensive information on birth control options is not only a matter of individual choice but also essential to the public good. Families who plan and prepare for pregnancy are more likely to have better health outcomes for both parents and children. By ensuring access to accurate information about birth control, we can empower individuals and families to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, leading to healthier families and communities overall.

Moreover, diverting public funds to anti-abortion organizations as proposed in HB2809 poses a serious risk of coercion for clients seeking reproductive healthcare services. Individuals who seek assistance from these organizations may be subjected to biased counseling or pressure to make decisions that do not align with their own values and preferences. This coercion undermines individuals' autonomy and may lead to decisions that are not in their best interest.

In addition, it's crucial to highlight that public funds should be focused on ending Kansas' racial disparities in maternal and infant health. Racial disparities persist in maternal and infant health outcomes, with Black and Indigenous individuals experiencing higher rates of maternal mortality and infant mortality compared to white individuals. *Allocating resources towards addressing these disparities should be a priority, rather than diverting funds to organizations that do not prioritize evidence-based reproductive healthcare services.*

In conclusion, HB2809 represents a dangerous departure from evidence-based public health practices and threatens the well-being of individuals and families in our state. Providing comprehensive information on birth control options is essential to promoting public health and ensuring individuals' reproductive rights. I urge you to oppose this bill and instead support policies that prioritize evidence-based reproductive healthcare services and empower individuals to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, while also addressing racial disparities in maternal and infant health.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

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