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Testimony in Support of SB 141

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House Federal and State Affairs Committee

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The Kansas Catholic Conference supports SB 141, legislation that would prohibit abortions performed solely because of the gender of the unborn child.

In January, the nation marked the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*. Over those forty years, 55 million unborn children have had their lives cut short by abortion. Their number, and the brutal manner of their death, defy comprehension: imagine the combined population of 26 American states being wiped out -- that would be 55 million people.

The issue before us today shines a light on the extreme cognitive dissonance that is so apparent in many Americans' attitudes towards abortion. Ours is a generation that looks upon unborn children in the womb through the marvel of 4D sonograms and has no doubt that we are seeing a baby, and yet many of these same people go about their lives untroubled by the fact that there are 1.2 million abortions *per year*. Somewhere in the neighborhood of half of these abortions ends the life of a little girl, yet we are told that abortion is a matter of women's rights and women's health. This seems an odd claim, since for females as much as males, death is not particularly healthy.

And now we will undoubtedly be told that the right to specifically target an unborn child for destruction purely because she is female must be protected in the name of *women's rights*. With this Orwellian claim, the profound moral confusion of the abortion advocacy movement is laid bare.

We are hopeful that consideration of SB 141 will help legislators and citizens of Kansas to consider more deeply the full implications of abortion. We also believe that the bill addresses the real issue of gender selection abortion, which usually means unborn girls being targeted for

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abortion by parents desiring a boy. This is a catastrophic moral and demographic problem in certain countries, and research shows that it happens in the United States as well,¹ though on a much smaller scale.

We might be tempted to hope that as time goes by, respect for women and their equal dignity and value will increase, making gender selection abortion attractive to fewer and fewer people. However, it seems equally likely that the coming trend towards designer babies may only desensitize people further to the idea of exercising “choices” with regards to the traits of their children, whether through genetic engineering or through abortion. And who among us can imagine what dystopian scenarios may await us in the future, when the technology will surely exist to create and incubate human beings “from scratch” without the need for mothers (or fathers) at all? This kind of legislation may well prove to be more needed than we now realize.

In conclusion, the Legislature should act to ensure that the practice of gender selection abortion not be allowed to take root in Kansas. Thank you for your consideration.

¹ See <http://www.pnas.org/content/105/15/5681.full.pdf+html?sid=58396a50-8da8-47af-ad5a-153da44c75a4> and http://coe.ucsf.edu/coe/news/sex_selection.html.