

State of Kansas
Senate

State Capitol, 561-W
Topeka, Kansas 66612
(785) 296-7370
richard.hilderbrand@senate.ks.gov



10337 SE 107th Terr
Galena, Kansas 66739
(417) 529-3262

Richard Hilderbrand
Senator, 13th District

February 12, 2018

Testimony in Support of SB 397 – Choose Life License Plate
Senate Transportation Committee

Honorable Chair – Mike Petersen
Vice Chair – John Doll
Ranking Minority – Pat Pettey
Honorable Committee Members

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and other esteemed members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill 2678.

My name is Senator Richard Hilderbrand,

and I am writing to voice my support for SB397, the Choose Life license plate.

The Choose Life license plate has been approved in 32 states and Washington, D.C., Oklahoma, Missouri, and Nebraska are among those state. It is time for Kansas to join this list.

"Choose Life" license plates have been criticized by [pro-choice](#) organizations, which have argued that in authorizing them, but not offering plates conveying a pro-choice message at the same time, states have carried out viewpoint discrimination. To this charge, pro-choice groups have just as much right to have a plate as we do, as long as they go through the same process we did and not try to piggy-back onto the various states' Choose Life bills.

When [Walker v. Texas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans](#) was rendered in June 2015, it allowed states to determine whether it wants controversial language on their plates or not, including pro- or anti-abortion language.

Walker v. Texas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, [576 U.S. ____](#) (2015), was a [United States Supreme Court](#) case in which the Court held that [license plates](#) are [government speech](#) and are consequently more easily regulated/subjected to content restrictions than private speech under the [First Amendment](#).

The Texas Division of the [Sons of Confederate Veterans](#) sought to have a specialty license plate issued in the state of Texas with an image of the [Confederate Battle Flag](#). The request was denied prompting the group to sue, claiming that denying a specialty plate was a First Amendment violation.

Thank you, Chairman, Petersen and Committee for your time and consideration it was an honor to speak before you. I pray that when you work this bill you would pass it out favorably from your committee.

Thank you,

Senator Richard Hilderbrand

District 13