

Kansas House Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
HCR 5003 – Value Them Both Amendment for Life – Proponent

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Chairmen Barker and members of the Committee, my name is Ann Marie Alvey. I am the Director of Project Rachel & Project Joseph a post-abortion healing ministry for women and men. Thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of the “Value Them Both” Constitutional Amendment for Life.

In our work we help *primarily* women heal from a past abortion or abortions. I am here to give voice to those who don't have one in the public forum, those who can't speak up for themselves because they experience so much fear, guilt, regret and shame for a choice they made, often decades ago.

In the 2 ½ years that I have been helping women, my eyes have been opened. I realize now that there are two victims in an abortion, the child *and* the mother. My heart breaks for them.

I also now realize that contrary to what many people believe, there is not a certain type of woman who has an abortion. They are of all races, socio-economic backgrounds and educational levels. Some are married, some not, some practice their religion, others do not, or have no affiliation. Some tell me they made their choice with the support of family and friends, some speak of no support, and some reveal they were pressured or coerced. But whether their choice was free or not, what unite all of these women are their deep seated, persistent feelings of regret, guilt and shame.

Women have told me “I went into the clinic as one person and came out a totally different one.” Though some might feel instant relief because the immediate crisis has been resolved, it's often temporary. Women deal with their pain by coping. They **deny**, **repress**, **suppress** and **rationalize** their feelings and thoughts. But a trigger can break through at any time, without warning. This could be a smell, a sound, a sensation, a flashback, a dream, the anniversary date of the abortion, the due date of the baby, or even another pregnancy. All of this takes a toll on women's mental health.

They often experience depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares and eating disorders. These are symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. Studies show that many women self-medicate in order to cope with their pain. Alcohol use/abuse has been known to increase 110%, and marijuana use/abuse 220% for post-abortive women. Suicidal behaviors increase by 155%. Sadly women aren't told this *could* happen to them as a result of their abortion, nor do many even link their symptoms to it.

There are also physical risks including pelvic infections, hemorrhaging, blood clots, perforation of the uterus, cut or torn cervix, an incomplete abortion, infection and sterility. Incredibly, my clients have told me they were not informed of *any* of the possible risks of adverse consequences, physical or psychological, before the abortion. *How is this informed consent?*

In my research, I was shocked to learn that 64% of abortions involved coercion. I checked that percentage against my clients and sadly, found it to be true. Coercion can range from manipulation to violence. I was astounded to learn that the leading cause of death for pregnant women is not complications from childbirth or even an abortion, but murder! Over half the women in this country are not choosing their abortions freely; someone else is choosing it for them. Women aren't the only ones invested in whether she carries her pregnancy to term or not, so are the fathers of those children and family members.

To say that abortion is a woman's "right" only emboldens those who have a personal interest in terminating her pregnancy: parents, husbands, boyfriends, some abusive, some not, as well as perpetrators of rape, incest and sex-trafficking. For women who are coerced in any way, to call it a "right" further victimizes them. That right will be used as a justification to force some women against their will. How is that right? How is that just?

Some would argue that these are extreme cases, or that women who suffer from their abortions are only a small number. What I've come to realize is that most women do not speak of their pain and suffering because they fear being judged and they don't believe anyone will have compassion for them. It takes profound courage for a woman to *even* call me! Where is the public voice of compassion for the mother?

Even *if* this were a minority of women, to discount their experience is to ignore, invalidate and minimize their suffering. That's discriminatory. A right does not discriminate. It is there to support what is good for all. Calling abortion a "right" is not good for *all* women.

Even if it were a minority, isn't that what we Democrats are always fighting for – the rights and protections of minority groups? Who is fighting for these women's rights?

Abortion has a profound effect on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health of millions of women. Making abortion a right, without any built in protections, victimizes at minimum, that 64% of women who did not choose their abortion and at maximum, *all* those who suffer as a result, including those who freely chose it. Who can be proud of a law that damages women's health in so many unforeseen ways? Women deserve better. I ask you to consider this when you are making your decision. Thank you.

For further information on the effects of abortion please visit the following sites:

[www.TheUnChoice.com](http://www.TheUnChoice.com)

[www.AfterAbortion.org](http://www.AfterAbortion.org)

[www.womansrighttoknow.org](http://www.womansrighttoknow.org)

[www.smartwomenshealthcare.com](http://www.smartwomenshealthcare.com)

[www.hushfilm.com](http://www.hushfilm.com)

[www.herchoicetoheal.com](http://www.herchoicetoheal.com)

Complications: Abortion's Impact on Women. The deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research Angela Lanfranchi, Ian Gentes, Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy. Latest worldwide, evidence-based, Scientific Studies and Research. Available on Amazon.com