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Senate Commite on Public Health and Welfare
Sen. Beverly Gossage

Opponent Testimony, Written and Oral

HB 2749

Chair Gossage 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 an unnecessary burden in the normal provision of abortion care. While we agree that information can help guide policy, the information sought from patients in this list of questions is invasive, irrelevant to their care, and is unnecessary information for the creation of more inclusive and compassionate reproductive health care policy at the state level.

- **Asking patients to list, rank, or otherwise respond to a litany of questions that are not relevant to the medical services they are seeking is invasive and stigmatizing.** There are any number of research organizations that could develop research and polling that address these questions in a systematic way outside of the clinical setting. Inside the clinic, our priority is to provide care that meets the needs of our patient, and conversation between patients and providers is focused and relevant. There is simply no natural place during a typical visit for questions of this type to be raised in a non-disruptive manner.



- **Patients expect their conversations with their healthcare provider to be relevant to their visit.** We all understand the implicit trust that we have in our medical providers, whether they are our primary care provider, a nurse at a wellness clinic, or a reproductive health care provider. We take this trust very seriously; we believe that through providing a welcoming and judgement-free clinic our patients have better experiences with reproductive healthcare, as well as better outcomes.
- **One way we follow through on our promise of judgement-free care is through our belief that every patient's reason for their abortion is valid.** Abortions are incredibly difficult to access in this region—by the time a patient makes it to our clinic, they have likely encountered several delays, obstacles, misdirection by fake clinics, and more that may have led them to question their decision. That type of questioning is at the heart of HB 2749. It is meant to sow one last seed of doubt in the patient's mind before their procedure.
- **The interrogation proposed in HB 2749 is a litany of invasive and medically unnecessary questions.** For example, 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.
- **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 right now, without the need for additional data:

- 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,
- 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.

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 submitted,

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