

Kansas House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

HCR 5003 – Value Them Both Amendment

Dr. Katie Adkins - PROPONENT

January 15, 2021

Dear Chairman Barker and Members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

I am thankful for the opportunity to share my testimony, and I appreciate those on the Committee taking the time to read my support of the Value Them Both Amendment:

On a cold, snowy day in China, a baby girl was left at the doorstep outside of an orphanage, wrapped in a blanket. The caretakers brought her inside, bundled her up, and fed her rice cereal. Shortly thereafter, an American woman flew to China and adopted the baby. The young girl grew, went to college, decided she wanted to become a doctor, and then went to medical school. My name is Katie Adkins, and that is my adoption story. I am currently in my second year of family medicine residency at Via Christi. Due to the one-child policy in China, it would have been easy (and possibly even expected) for my biological mother to abort me. But I am here today because she chose life for me, and all of you who are reading or hearing this message can do so because someone chose life for you.

I am greatly saddened, angered, and sickened to know that because of the Supreme Court ruling, Kansas essentially allows virtually unlimited rights to abortion. There is no protection for the weak and vulnerable, as I myself was. As a resident physician, I can envision the future harms of abortion for my patients, especially without any safeguard or limitation on abortion to protect women and children. Many of my patients come from a lower socioeconomic background and have limited education; in fact, one of my older patients just told me last week that he is unable to read. There is no protection for women with limited education, and do not know of the risks and harms of abortion – not only the known harm and death to their preborn babies, but also potential safety and medical harm to themselves that could even lead to their own deaths. These women would not have the opportunity to make an informed decision. As a provider, I would never consider performing a medical procedure until the patient has heard all the risks and benefits and is able to make an informed decision and consent. Why should abortion be different, especially when it involves another human?

Just as it is critical for laws and regulations to be in place for women to be able to make informed decisions, it is also critical for the offices and clinics that would perform such procedures to be under regular safety and health inspection. Consequences can be disastrous and life-threatening if basic sanitary and safety measures are not followed, and standards must be regularly enforced to limit such preventable potential complications. Finally, minors must have parental consent in the process of seeking abortion. It is well agreed upon that the frontal lobe of the brain (the part of the brain that is responsible for executive decisions and judgment) does not fully develop until at least early 20's. It is imperative that minors have parental guidance in pursuing such a monumental decision, which is a critical piece in truly informed consent.

Finally, I would like to plead for expanding access and funding for adoption, as this is vital for children, both born and preborn. It is my hope that my story has affected at least one of you, and you will not only vote for this Amendment, but also begin advocating for easier pathways to adoption, especially financially. Women considering abortion would have greater confidence with an increased amount of resources and support to help make that possible. We have a responsibility to protect and value both women and children, born and unborn. Thank you again, and please vote for this Amendment.

Sincerely,

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