

Message from the Governor

Over the last several years, we have worked on lowering abortion rates in Kansas by focusing on adoption incentives, extended health services for pregnant women, providing sex education and offering a variety of support services for families.

Those efforts are having a positive impact; recently we learned that the abortion rate in Kansas continues to go down.

For years, the people of Kansas have asked their elected officials to move beyond legislative debates on issues like abortion and focus their attention on issues that can be solved in the Statehouse - stronger schools, affordable health care and economic growth.

Kansans are proud of the progress we've made lowering the abortion rate and lifting our economy. It's time for legislators to recognize that progress and focus on the things that continue to move us forward.

I am concerned about a number of provisions in SB 389. The United States Supreme Court decisions make clear that any law regulating abortion must contain exceptions for pregnancies which endanger the woman's life or health. However, SB 389 allows a variety of individuals to seek a court order preventing a woman from obtaining an abortion, even where it may be necessary to save her life. I am concerned that the bill is likely unconstitutional or even worse, endangers the lives of women.

The bill contains unprecedented expansions of legal proceedings which would likely encourage extensive litigation and also unnecessarily jeopardizes the privacy of Kansas women's confidential medical records.

As Governor, nothing is more important to me than the safety, health and privacy rights of our citizens. I am vetoing SB 389 because it endangers the health of women and is likely to be found in violation the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Kansas.

Therefore, pursuant to Article 2, Section 14 of the Constitution of the State of Kansas, I veto House Substitute for Senate Bill 389.

Vetoed: April 21, 2008

Signed: Kathleen Sebelius