



Michigan National Organization for Women

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Honorable Kenneth Kurtz, Chair
House Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors
992 Anderson House Office Building
Lansing, MI

Dear Representative Kurtz and Members of the House Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors

The Michigan National Organization for Women **opposes HB 4798, 4799, 5134, and 5182** because the bills are biased against abortion and women seeking abortions. The bills set up harassing procedures to intimidate women into not choosing an abortion. In short, these bills that pretend to protect women against coercion are themselves coercive.

You are trying in these bills to make it as difficult as possible for women to access abortion, while doing absolutely nothing to address the causes of unintended pregnancies.

As we testified during your hearing on the partial-birth abortion ban, a far bigger problem is the lack of good laws and regulations to prevent unintended pregnancy. If we could further reduce unintended pregnancies, we could reduce the number of abortions in Michigan. About half of pregnancies are unintended. One out of three women will have an abortion in her lifetime.

You need to require contraceptive coverage in all insurance sold in Michigan. You need to require age-appropriate, comprehensive sex education in the schools. You need to require pharmacists to fill birth control prescriptions. You need to require emergency rooms to provide emergency birth control to rape victims. You need to fully fund public health initiatives to prevent unintended pregnancies. You need to regulate the crisis pregnancy centers to require full disclosure that they do not provide unbiased information about abortion and abortion alternatives. With all due respect, these measures would prevent more abortions than new laws about coerced abortion.

These bills seek to make the abortion provider an ally of the anti-abortion movement in Michigan. Women seeking an abortion expect their doctors to be concerned about their health and well-being, not an advocate for anti-abortion zealots. Simply put, these bills over-regulate abortion providers and harass pregnant women seeking an abortion into carrying a pregnancy to term. They deserve to be defeated.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Mary Pollock
Legislative Vice President

NOW's purpose is to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.