

Dear Legislators, thank you for your service to our communities and for hearing my testimony.

My name is Isabel Call and I am a pastor, scholar, and deeply spiritual person. I speak for myself as well as my congregation, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Manhattan, Kansas.

I appreciate the concern you convey for pregnant people in your draft legislation, House Bill 2653. I have thought and prayed a great deal about it in the short time since it was brought to my attention. I am disappointed you have not allowed more time for Kansans to consider your proposal.

My discernment has led me to unequivocally oppose your proposed bill. It is the wrong approach. People carrying pregnancies to term are best supported through accessible medical care. For those most vulnerable to the financial burdens of pregnancy, and thus most likely to apply for the new benefits you propose, decent medical insurance would be a much better support system. Please devote your energy and attention to passing Medicaid expansion, which is supported by the vast majority of Kansans.

Your proposed legislation clearly aims to change the legal landscape for abortion in this state by more restrictively defining the procedure. This, despite Kansans' clear rejection of abortion restrictions in proposed 2022 constitutional amendments. Please listen to the people.

This convoluted extension of child support creates additional burdens for our child support system with no additional funding. By failing to indicate how the state will determine the date of conception, how pregnancy loss will be addressed, paternity testing, or a host of other pertinent issues, you would create significant difficulties in enacting this legislation. Rather than create additional mandates for our state workers and red tape for people seeking financial support for medical care, we should properly fund family support services and other programs that aim to help families.