



Testimony of Taylor Morton, Kansas Lobbyist and Policy Analyst (written only testimony)  
Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes  
Regarding SB 498 (Opponent)  
Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation  
March 5, 2024

Planned Parenthood Great Plains Votes (“PPGPV”) is the political and advocacy arm of Planned Parenthood Great Plains (“PPGP”). PPGP offers expert, compassionate sexual and reproductive health care to patients with three health center locations in Kansas. PPGPV submits this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 498. SB 498 would establish a tax credit for contributions to “eligible charitable organizations” and provide a sales tax exemption for said organizations. It would also establish a child tax credit, increase the tax credit amount for adoption expenses, and make the credit refundable. Based upon the requirements outlined in this bill, the organizations that would primarily qualify as “eligible charitable organizations” are those known as crisis pregnancy centers (“CPCs”). On the surface, this bill appears to support pregnant Kansans—but in reality, SB 498 would heavily incentivize individuals and businesses to donate to CPCs and divert funds away from legitimate comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care.

CPCs are nonprofit organizations that present themselves as health care clinics but operate with the intention of persuading pregnant people against seeking abortion care. CPCs are widely considered to be unethical by health care professionals and organizations—including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the American Medical Association (AMA).<sup>1 2</sup> There is no requirement in SB 498 mandating that eligible charitable organizations provide medically accurate information to clients—nor are they required to provide ethical, comprehensive, evidence-based health care. CPCs often provide inaccurate and misleading information that deliberately misrepresents abortion safety as a means of dissuading people from seeking abortion care.<sup>3</sup> CPCs cause delays in accessing health care during pregnancy and spread misinformation about abortion and so-called “abortion reversal.”<sup>4</sup>

CPCs employ a myriad of misleading and harmful tactics to dissuade pregnant people from seeking abortion care. These tactics include:<sup>5</sup>

- Misrepresenting abortion safety and asserting false risks of abortion (for example, stating a link between abortion and breast cancer, infertility, mental illness, and preterm birth).
- Suggesting that there is a high risk of complication associated with abortion—despite abortion being one of the safest medical procedures performed in the U.S., with patients experiencing complications less than one percent of the time.<sup>6</sup>
- Intentionally overestimating a pregnant person’s gestational age and falsely suggesting they are too far along to access abortion per state law.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acog.org/advocacy/abortion-is-essential/trending-issues/issue-brief-crisis-pregnancy-centers>

<sup>2</sup> <https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/truth?uri=%2FAMADoc%2FHOD.xml-0-3697.xml>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9189146/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.acog.org/advocacy/abortion-is-essential/trending-issues/issue-brief-crisis-pregnancy-centers>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.acog.org/-/media/project/acog/acogorg/files/advocacy/issue-briefs/crisis-pregnancy-centers.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.kff.org/womens-health-policy/issue-brief/key-facts-on-abortion-in-the-united-states/#How-safe-are-abortions>



- Using overly graphic and potentially upsetting visuals and/or performing an ultrasound to invoke an emotional response under the guise of “informing” or “diagnosing” a pregnant client.
- Downplaying the real impact of pregnancy and childbirth on peoples’ lives and health.
- Advertising online using deceptive and misleading keywords, such as “abortion clinic” and manipulating web search data to appear in searches for abortion clinics despite not providing abortion care.
- Falsely representing the facility as a legitimate, regulated health care clinic that offers unbiased, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care. This is done by selecting names similar to those of legitimate clinics, locating near reproductive health clinics, and branding the facility to resemble legitimate clinics, etc.
- Misrepresenting nonmedical staff and volunteers as medical personnel by having them wear lab coats and scrubs and perform ultrasounds.

These examples are taken from a national review of CPCs by the ACOG, and it is not an exhaustive list. CPCs in Kansas are not the outlier in this study or others that examine CPC tactics that are demonstrably deceptive and misleading. CPCs in Kansas utilize these and other tactics to pressure pregnant Kansans to prevent them from obtaining an abortion. In a 2023 interview with KMUW, a client of Choices Medical Clinic—a CPC in Wichita—described the experience as “surreal and condescending” and said staff “didn’t want to believe that [she] wanted this baby – because the entire pitch was, ‘You’re safe. You don’t need an abortion.’” This client never wanted an abortion and was visiting Choices Medical Clinic to receive the free ultrasound and pregnancy testing services advertised.<sup>7</sup>

CPCs are known for using deceptive tactics to lure patients seeking abortions to their clinics, such as opening right next to family planning clinics, using similar names, phrases, and branding, and posing as family planning clinic employees. Advice & Aid Pregnancy Center in Overland Park is located directly across from the Planned Parenthood – Comprehensive Health Center (“PPGP Health Center”). Advice & Aid has a large sign facing the street that reads “Pregnancy & Abortion Information.” This sign is misleading, as Advice & Aid does not perform or refer for abortions.<sup>8</sup> The abortion-related “services” listed on their website are “Post Abortion Assessment,” “After Abortion Support,” “Abortion Information,” and “Abortion Pill Reversal Treatment.”<sup>9</sup> So-called “abortion reversal” is not supported by medical science, and such “treatments” can be very dangerous, and do not meet medical standards.<sup>10</sup> A page on the Advice & Aid website entitled “Know the Abortion Risks” lists medical risks that deliberately misrepresent abortion safety, and falsely state that abortion can lead to future infertility and adverse mental health outcomes.<sup>11</sup> Having an abortion does not increase the risk of secondary infertility or mental health disorders.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.kcur.org/2023-02-16/crisis-pregnancy-centers-abortion-kansas-millions-tax-dollars>

<sup>8</sup> <https://adviceandaid.com/about-us/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://adviceandaid.com/our-services/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.acog.org/advocacy/facts-are-important/medication-abortion-reversal-is-not-supported-by-science>

<sup>11</sup> <https://adviceandaid.com/know-the-abortion-risks/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/2018/03/the-quality-of-abortion-care-depends-on-where-a-woman-lives-says-one-of-most-comprehensive-reviews-of-research-on-safety-and-quality-of-abortion-care-in-the-us>



Additionally, the Advice & Aid sign is in the exact color blue of the PPGP Health Center signs. Employees and volunteers of Advice & Aid in Overland Park also wear scrubs that are the same colors as those worn by PPGP Health Center staff. All of this could be coincidental, but it appears to be deliberately misleading—and a reasonable person could conclude as much. PPGP Health Center patients have gone to the Advice & Aid facility by mistake, and these patients said they felt pressured to stay—even after making it clear they meant to go to the PPGP Health Center across the street for an appointment.

Legitimate health care organizations that provide, pay for, or refer for abortion would not be considered eligible charitable organizations under SB 498. Yet CPCs—which are not held to the same regulatory standards and oversight as medical facilities—would be eligible because they “provide assistance to women in order to carry their pregnancy to term, encouraging parenting or adoption and prevent abortion.” That is the only requirement set forth to be considered an eligible organization in this bill. SB 498 would advance an anti-abortion agenda and narrative in Kansas—despite broad public support for abortion access in the state.

Furthermore, SB 498 would have disastrous financial ramifications. According to the fiscal note for this bill, SB 498 would decrease state revenue by \$807,591,000 in FY 2025. In addition, if implementation of this bill and other enacted legislation exceeds existing resources, additional expenditures for outside contract programmer services beyond the current budget would be required. SB 498 would be tremendously costly for the state of Kansas. Kansas would lose tax money—including, but not limited to, a loss of tax dollars for public schools, public health, infrastructure, and public employment.

To address harmful CPC practices and ensure pregnant Kansans have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, lawmakers need to ensure that government funding goes to legitimate health care organizations. CPCs need to be held accountable for deceptive tactics—and halting state funding and support for CPCs is crucial. By providing tax credits to CPC donors, the state implicitly endorses the unregulated, unethical, and harmful tactics of these organizations. PPGPV strongly urges the Committee to oppose SB 498.

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