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The Minnesota Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

March 23, 2016

Representative Tara Mack
Health and Human Services Reform Committee
Minnesota State Legislature

Dear Representative Mack and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today as the Chair of the Minnesota Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to express my concerns related to S.F. 2449/H.F. 3150.

The reporting of data already required by abortion providers in Minnesota interferes in the physician-patient relationship and lacks any sound public health rationale. This amendment stands to further stigmatize the legal procedure of abortion and separate it from the remainder of the practice of medicine. There is no other area of the practice of medicine in this State that is subject to such seemingly arbitrary legislative interference in the physician-patient relationship. This is a disservice to the licensed and skilled physicians who practice in our state and to the patients they serve.

The specific reporting requirement to be added by S.F. 2449/H.F. 3150 relate to the practice of telemedicine. Telemedicine provides access to services for women in rural areas where providers may be limited. In addition, even for patients with ready access, the option of telemedicine provides a degree of privacy and an alternative way to access care. We should be striving to enhance access to affordable, quality health care, not limit it.

There have been some concerns that telemedicine may lack safety or quality, but there have been two studies on the use of telemedicine to provide medication abortions in Iowa that demonstrate it is a safe and effective approach. It is therefore not clear why it is necessary to legislate this information related to abortions, making an already onerous process of reporting even more burdensome. Indeed, this runs counter to the bipartisan group of legislators from the 2015 legislative session who agreed that we should be reducing barriers to telemedicine to maximize access to existing health care providers.

The women of Minnesota deserve ready access to the full range of reproductive services that is offered by modern medicine and I am concerned that this bill stands to impede women from obtaining optimal and safe care.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas J. Creedon, MD, PhD
Chair, Minnesota Section
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists