



March 2, 2017

Members of the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), I am writing to express opposition to two bills before you today – HF 812 (Kiel), which would create a new licensing requirement for clinics or other outpatient health centers in which 10 more pregnancy terminations per month are performed, and HF 809 (Franson), which would bar the use of state funds by Minnesota Health Care Programs for pregnancy termination.

With respect to HF 812, Minnesota has historically adopted new licensing standards in order to protect the health and safety of the public. There is no specific scientific basis to subject outpatient clinics that perform pregnancy terminations to licensure. Currently, any procedure that can safely be performed in an outpatient clinic is subject to oversight and regulation through the professional licensing of the physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals delivering that care. There is no evidence that outpatient pregnancy terminations cannot be safely performed in these settings or that current professional licensing standards are insufficient.

It is also important to note the potential reach of this legislation. The specific procedures used for elective abortions may be the same procedures used to terminate seriously complicated pregnancies or non-viable pregnancies.

The MMA is unaware of any specific evidence in Minnesota of substandard care in clinics that provide pregnancy termination services. Likewise, the MMA is not convinced that patient safety is advanced in any meaningful way as a result of the licensing requirements established in this legislation. Finally, the MMA is concerned that adoption of this legislation could jeopardize access to care for pregnant women.

With respect to HF 809, the MMA has serious concerns about the impact this bill would have in creating inequitable treatment and access to medical services for low-income women relative to women with other sources of health care coverage. The MMA urges you to oppose both bills.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Agerter, MD
President