

March 22, 2005

## STATEMENT

As a woman of the state of Kansas I am appalled that a bill such as H.B. 2503, the Women's Protection Act would have to be re-introduced year after year. Why, after four years are we stalling to protect women? To even debate over whether or not to regulate a certain medical industry is beyond my wildest imagination. I hope this year you'll find it in your heart to protect Kansas women from unregulated healthcare.

Here in Wichita at the Women's Health Care Center, Dr. George Tiller's abortion clinic, we have witnessed first hand five emergency medical vehicles leaving his practice within the last thirteen months with one abortion related death on a nineteen year old down syndrome woman. Currently Tiller, Kansas' largest abortion provider is involved in a grand jury investigation by the state of Texas and is being investigated in our own state.

How many more women need to be injured, how many more have to die before something is done to regulate and oversee the abortion industry in Kansas?

I feel that a dog is more protected than women in the state of Kansas, as a vet's office is regulated and put through the highest scrutiny to provide adequate safety measures and cleanliness.

On a personal note I want to let you know about a funeral I was invited to attend. This was not an ordinary funeral though, as you see, the woman's body who lay in the coffin was the body of Carolina Gutierrez, a young woman who died a horrendous death due to the abortion she received at the Maber Medical Center in Miami, Florida.

Two days after her abortion on December 19, 1995, Carolina lay in critical care; infection (blood poisoning) raging through her body after her uterus was punctured numerous times. The abortionist of record, Dr. Luis Marti fled the country with all medical records. His failure to return her calls for help the night of Carolina's abortion allowed the physical crisis to escalate where she had to be rushed by fire rescue to Jackson Memorial Hospital.\*

A hysterectomy was necessary because of the infection, yet her condition worsened. On February 1, after several postponements, she faced surgery once again-an amputation of both feet and her legs below the knees due to gangrene, due to unsterile equipment. She had been in a state of induced sleep since the beginning of her seven weeks' hospitalization. Her hands, too, became swollen and turned black, the mark of gangrene; amputation would occur after the fingers fell off.

February 5 at 9:55am, Carolina took her last breath. A tragic death. She left behind a very distraught husband and two very sad little children.

It was a funeral I will never forget. Her husband Jose asked me to please share Carolina's story anytime I could get the chance and to show her picture. He said to tell anyone I could that abortion may be legal, but it is definitely not safe.

You may say, but that was Florida; but how do you know a tragic death like Carolina's has not occurred here in Kansas since we do not have a regulated abortion industry to protect women in our state?

As a woman I ask you to make sure this essential measure passes out of committee for a vote to make sure there are no more deaths such as happened at Tillers' on January 13 and that there will not be a story such as Carolina's in the state of Kansas. This is the only right and reasonable thing to do!

Please do not tell me you care about women if H.B. 2503 does not leave committee. This will show me you are more concerned about rights than about the protection of women in the state of Kansas and abroad, since women come from around the world to Wichita to receive late term abortions.

You have a responsibility to all women in Kansas. Will you show us how much you care about protecting women, or will you show us how much more you care about a woman's right?

Please, for the health, safety and protection of women, vote for H.B. 2503.

Thank you,

Michele Herzog  
The True Majority, Director  
620-752-3890

\*Sun Sentinel, Tuesday, February 6, 1996