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65-6703

Chapter 65.--PUBLIC HEALTH

Article 67.--ABORTION

65-6703. Abortion prohibited when fetus viable, exceptions; determination of age of fetus; determination of viability; reports; retention of medical records; viable, defined; criminal penalties. (a) No person shall perform or induce an abortion when the fetus is viable unless such person is a physician and has a documented referral from another physician not legally or financially affiliated with the physician performing or inducing the abortion and both physicians determine that: (1) The abortion is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman; or (2) a continuation of the pregnancy will cause a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman.

(b) (1) Except in the case of a medical emergency, prior to performing an abortion upon a woman, the physician shall determine the gestational age of the fetus according to accepted obstetrical and neonatal practice and standards applied by physicians in the same or similar circumstances. If the physician determines the gestational age is less than 22 weeks, the physician shall document as part of the medical records of the woman the basis for the determination.

(2) If the physician determines the gestational age of the fetus is 22 or more weeks, prior to performing an abortion upon the woman the physician shall determine if the fetus is viable by using and exercising that degree of care, skill and proficiency commonly exercised by the ordinary skillful, careful and prudent physician in the same or similar circumstances. In making this determination of viability, the physician shall perform or cause to be performed such medical examinations and tests as are necessary to make a finding of the gestational age of the fetus and shall enter such findings and determinations of viability in the medical record of the woman.

(3) If the physician determines the gestational age of a fetus is 22 or more weeks, and determines that the fetus is not viable and performs an abortion on the woman, the physician shall report such determinations and the reasons for such determinations in writing to the medical care facility in which the abortion is performed for inclusion in the report of the medical care facility to the secretary of health and environment under K.S.A. 65-445 and amendments thereto or if the abortion is not performed in a medical care facility, the physician shall report such determinations and the reasons for such determinations in writing to the secretary of health and environment as part of the written report made by the physician to the secretary of health and environment under K.S.A. 65-445 and amendments thereto.

(4) If the physician who is to perform the abortion determines the gestational age of a fetus is 22 or more weeks, and determines that the fetus is viable, both physicians under subsection (a) determine in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) that an

abortion is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman or that a continuation of the pregnancy will cause a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman and the physician performs an abortion on the woman, the physician who performs the abortion shall report such determinations, the reasons for such determinations and the basis for the determination that an abortion is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman or that a continuation of the pregnancy will cause a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman in writing to the medical care facility in which the abortion is performed for inclusion in the report of the medical care facility to the secretary of health and environment under K.S.A. 65-445 and amendments thereto or if the abortion is not performed in a medical care facility, the physician who performs the abortion shall report such determinations, the reasons for such determinations and the basis for the determination that an abortion is necessary to preserve the life of the pregnant woman or that a continuation of the pregnancy will cause a substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman in writing to the secretary of health and environment as part of the written report made by the physician to the secretary of health and environment under K.S.A. 65-445 and amendments thereto.

(5) The physician shall retain the medical records required to be kept under paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection (b) for not less than five years and shall retain a copy of the written reports required under paragraphs (3) and (4) of this subsection (b) for not less than five years.

(c) A woman upon whom an abortion is performed shall not be prosecuted under this section for a conspiracy to violate this section pursuant to K.S.A. 21-3302, and amendments thereto.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a right to an abortion. Notwithstanding any provision of this section, a person shall not perform an abortion that is prohibited by law.

(e) As used in this section, "viable" means that stage of fetal development when it is the physician's judgment according to accepted obstetrical or neonatal standards of care and practice applied by physicians in the same or similar circumstances that there is a reasonable probability that the life of the child can be continued indefinitely outside the mother's womb with natural or artificial life-supportive measures.

(f) If any provision of this section is held to be invalid or unconstitutional, it shall be conclusively presumed that the legislature would have enacted the remainder of this section without such invalid or unconstitutional provision.

(g) Upon a first conviction of a violation of this section, a person shall be guilty of a class A nonperson misdemeanor. Upon a second or subsequent conviction of a violation of this section, a person shall be guilty of a severity level 10, nonperson felony.

History: L. 1992, ch. 183, § 3; L. 1993, ch. 291, § 240; L. 1998, ch. 142, § 15; July 1.