Testimony from Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life - In Opposition of S.F. 473

MN Senate Judiciary Committee - February 23, 2026

The citizens of Minnesota deserve better than this Un-Equal Rights Amendment. SF 473, like its predecessor, once again conceals abortion-up-to-birth in innocuous language, aiming to deceive Minnesotans into voting for abortion for all nine months of pregnancy with no protections for babies at any point, and placing that extreme position into the heart of our state Constitution. It also includes no protection for faith, creed, religion, or conscience.

The proposed Amendment lists race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, and sex, further defining sex to include but not be limited to "making and effectuating decisions about all matters relating to one's own pregnancy or decision whether to become or remain pregnant."

However, the ballot language that is proposed to be offered to the people for their vote merely summarizes this definition as "sex, including pregnancy."

Every citizen of this state opposes discrimination against a woman based on her pregnancy. But the actual policy which would go into our Constitution would provide a fundamental right to make decisions about "becoming and remaining pregnant" with no protection for babies at any gestational age, including healthy but inconvenient viable babies. Thus, by agreeing to prevent discrimination based on sex and/or pregnancy, voters would be unknowingly enshrining unlimited abortion into our state Constitution.

Polling consistently shows that an Equal Rights Amendment containing abortion is unpopular. To keep its slim chance at passage, abortion proponents know they must shroud abortion in innocuous language to keep voters in the dark. A KSTP poll from May 2024 also shows that 64% of the registered voters surveyed thought that abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment should be handled separately. Only 24% of Minnesotans thought the issues should be combined in the same amendment.[1]

If this proposal were truthful about what it's trying to push into our Constitution, Minnesotans across the state and throughout the Twin Cities would vote a resounding "NO." Not only do Minnesotans oppose combining abortion with an ERA, but 68% of Minnesotans consistently say that they want reasonable protections for babies, particularly those who feel excruciating pain and could just as easily be delivered alive and thriving, rather than aborted.[2]

In the context of the plethora of rights listed in this so-called ERA, the omission of creed, religion, and conscience is startling. Creed was included in previous versions of a Minnesota ERA up until 2024.[3] It is clear that this current language does not advance true equal rights. It threatens the rights of those who disagree with its agenda.

Even the Equal Rights Amendment that passed in 2024 in New York included language protecting creed and religion. The language on the ballot question presented to the people of New York also matched the true text of the amendment to the constitution.[4] Like the citizens of New York, the citizens of Minnesota deserve equal protection for creed, religion, and conscience.

Furthermore, because discrimination based on "age" is not included, this proposed "equal rights" amendment still leaves several demographic groups out. There are no protections against discrimination for newborn babies born alive as a result of the abortion protected by the "decision whether to become or remain pregnant." While the Amendment purports to protect people on the basis of disability, newborn infants born with disabilities and/or congenital diseases are left in question.

At a time when our legislature should be particularly careful to avoid even the appearance of fraud or deceit, hiding unlimited abortion in a new constitutional amendment proposal is not the conduct of a trustworthy government. The truth will be brought to light, and Minnesotans will see this amendment for what it is.

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1 "KSTP/Surveyusa Poll: Minnesota Voters Say Equal Rights and Abortion Should Be in Separate Constitutional Amendments." KSTP.Com 5 Eyewitness News, 14 May 2024, kstp.com/kstp-news/top-news/kstp-surveyusa-poll-minnesota-voters-say-equal-rights-and-abortion-should-be-in-separate-constitutional-amendments/

2 "Minnesota Poll Results: U.S. Supreme Court and Abortion." Star Tribune, 19 Sept. 2022, www.startribune.com/minnesota-poll-us-supreme-court-abortion-roe-v-wade-men-women-voters-republicans-democrats-2022/600207479.

3 "SF 37." SF 37 as Introduced - 93rd Legislature (2023 - 2024), 2023, www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=SF0037&session=ls93&version=latest&session_number=0&session_year=2023.

4 "Proposal 1: Equal Rights Amendment." NYSenate.Gov, 10 Sept. 2024, www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/articles/2024/brad-hoylman-sigal/proposal-1-equal-rights-amendment.