

Some direct quotes from floor debate on HB2564, the sweeping abortion restriction bill on March 11, 2009 in the House of Representatives:

Rep. Frank Antenori (R) Tucson, Green Valley, Sierra Vista

Antenori: "Women will not be denied access to contraception; will not be denied access to health care."

This bill WILL deny women access to emergency contraception which is a form of birth control. It will also drastically reduce access to care in rural and underserved areas. Women will be forced to delay their abortion care, in turn increasing their health risks. His bill causes an undue burden on women.

Antenori: "There is a duty to protect either our wives or our daughters from making decisions that may come back to haunt them further down the road in their lives. "

It is not the role of politicians to interfere with the relationship between a woman, her family and her medical provider. Every woman has the right to make the medical decisions that are best for her; it is not the government's place to make those decisions.

Rep. Nancy Barto(R) Cave Creek, Carefree, Scottsdale

Barto: "This bill protects women."

This bill does nothing but create barriers, increase cost, and deny access to services and providers. Politicians are stripping Arizona families of their jobs, education, homes, and with this bill, health care. Now is the time to help women and families, not create additional barriers to accessing health care.

Barto: "It protects the civil rights of health providers."

This bill violates the rights of women to access medication and information. It interjects the opinions of politicians into the personal, private decisions between a woman and her medical provider. Additionally, this bill will allow pharmacists to refuse to fill a prescription that a medical provider deems medically necessary, putting the patient at risk.

Barto: "It strengthens the doctor/patient relationship."

This bill will force medical professionals to deliver a government-mandated lecture filled with misleading information, compromising the trust between patients and their medical provider.

Barto "Informed consent is not happening in Arizona regarding abortion."

Informed consent is required by medical protocol and is standard medical practice in Arizona. Medical professionals work to ensure that each patient facing this decision is given complete information regarding all of her options as well as one-on-one education.

Barto: "A waiting period does not place an undue burden on women."

A 24-hour waiting period will create a financial burden on women who must travel long distances to access abortion care, since availability will be limited to only Phoenix and Tucson. This will result in lost wages and increased child care expenses. No other medical procedure requires a forced government lecture followed by a 24-hour waiting period. As a result of these restrictions, women will delay their abortion care, increasing their health risks. This creates an undue burden and reduces access to care in rural and underserved areas.

Barto: "Rights of conscience laws have been in place for thirty years protecting medical professionals."

So why is it necessary to add this language to this bill? The truth is, this bill will make it more difficult for women to find health care professionals who will provide complete and accurate medical information. Access to abortion care and emergency contraception will be compromised by allowing pharmacists and medical providers to withhold information and medication from women. If a medical provider or pharmacist is not comfortable giving medically accurate information to patients, that person shouldn't be practicing medicine.

Barto: "Prevention is an issue. I think we can all agree that preventing pregnancy, unwanted and unintended pregnancy is something that we all want to accomplish but that is for another discussion and another piece of legislation for another day and really shouldn't have a bearing on what we are trying to accomplish here."

Prevention IS the issue. We consistently rank in the bottom two of all western states in the number of abortions performed. However, Arizona has the second highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation, and 95 percent of those pregnancies are unplanned. Arizonans deserve medically accurate information and affordable access to health care.

Barto: "Women are meeting their doctor only minutes before their abortion and not given adequate medical information to make an informed choice. Most of the time, they are meeting in groups which opposes HIPAA laws."

Major providers, such as Planned Parenthood Arizona, strictly adhere to all HIPAA requirements; and each patient is given information regarding all of her options as well as one-on-one counseling when faced with an unplanned pregnancy.

Barto: "Nurses are allowed to perform abortions in our state even though they are not qualified to handle the complications of such a procedure."

The Arizona Board of Nursing has determined that providing early abortion care is within the scope of practice of a highly and specially trained nurse practitioner, and recognizes the widely-accepted opinion among medical professionals that nurse practitioners and other advanced practice clinicians are competent and qualified to provide early abortion care. This bill will greatly reduce the availability of abortion care in Arizona.

Barto: "Parent's rights are routinely violated regarding their minor daughters obtaining an abortion without their consent."

Arizona already requires written parental consent for minors to access abortion care. This bill will require third-party involvement in the private decisions that young women make with their parents regarding abortion by forcing parents to have their consent form notarized by someone who is not held to any ethical standards regarding patient privacy.

Rep. John Kavanagh (R) Fountain Hills and Scottsdale

Kavanagh: "This is a bill which makes the process better."

This bill does nothing but create barriers, increase cost, and deny access to services and providers to women who seek abortion care. It is a bill designed to make it more difficult to access abortion care in Arizona and more difficult for medical providers to provide care.

Kavanagh: "This is not interfering in the relationship of the doctor and patient."

This bill sends the message that politicians know what will best protect the health of a pregnant woman, suggesting that physicians need the legislature to dictate what is medically appropriate. It forces medical professionals to deliver a government-mandated lecture filled with misleading information. The sponsors of the bill have made a list that a medical provider will be required to read, intended to coerce and shame a woman into changing her mind about her decision to access abortion care.