

SENATE JUDICIARY

Exhibit No. 3
Date: 3/25/15
Bill No. HB587

March 25, 2015

To: Montana Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Tracy Ullrey, CEO, Options Women's Clinic

RE: Testimony in support of HB587

Mr. Chairman and committee members, my name is Tracy Ullrey. I am the CEO at Options Women's Clinic, an accredited medical clinic specializing in pregnancy diagnosis and support services.

I am here today to support House Bill 587.

In many states abortion providers have wanted to take short cuts with women's health and it is our goal to protect the health interests of women. A "webcam abortion" would subject women to substandard care by allowing non-physicians to give them abortion-inducing drugs which is contrary to the safety guidelines put in place by the FDA. FDA reports show more than a dozen women have died and thousands injured as a result of these drugs. We are concerned that this practice puts women's health at risk.

Mifeprex, known as RU 486, and its companion drug are administered up to 7 weeks gestation. It is recommended by the manufacturer that the process involve three trips to a doctor.

Right on the manufacture's website it states that these drugs should NOT be used if you cannot return to your doctor for additional visits and if you cannot easily get emergency medical help in the 2 weeks following use of Mifeprex. It also states that up to 8% of women will need a surgical procedure to end the pregnancy or stop heavy bleeding.

The webcam process has the women consult with a physician through a teleconference or Skype-type interview. Based upon an initial examination by someone other than the doctor and that brief conversation on-line, the woman is given the drugs. The manufacturer states that this is not to be used in the case of ectopic pregnancy. Who is confirming that the woman has a viable, intrauterine pregnancy?

About half of the women who take RU486 will abort while at the doctor's office, another 26 percent abort within the next 20 hours at any location at home or in public. The remainder of women either have an abortion in the coming weeks or none at all if the drug fails to work — making a surgical abortion necessary.

It is only logical to expect a physician to be present when these potent drugs are provided and to require the physician to schedule a follow-up appointment with the woman in order to evaluate her health post-abortion.

Many will tell you that this bill either about abortion in general or about the merits of telemedicine. Neither are true. This is simply an effort to ensure that women in Montana receive the highest standard of care and that their health and well-being are not being compromised through telemedical abortion services.

Webcam abortions are dangerous for women and Montana women deserve better.

So in the best interest of the women of Montana I ask you to support House Bill 587.

Thank you for your time.