

Testimonial statement in opposition to HB 15-1128

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For Honorable members of the Colorado House Health, Insurance, & Environment Committee

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I have been practicing obstetrics and gynecology for 38 years in Durango, Colorado. A significant part of my practice has been at the Planned Parenthood clinic in Durango, where I have performed surgical abortions for about 35 years (for the first two years or so there were no abortions performed at the Planned Parenthood clinic). In addition, in the past I have performed surgical abortions in other freestanding clinics.

I can only remember transferring women by ambulance for hospital care on two occasions. Once was perhaps 20 years ago. This woman was older and had already born 8 children. She had heavy bleeding after the procedure and we were unable to control it at the Planned Parenthood clinic. I accompanied this woman to the hospital in the ambulance. By the time we arrived, the bleeding had moderated and so no specific treatment was needed—although we kept her overnight for observation.

The second event was a woman who had been given oral medication in preparation for the abortion, but she felt that the pill had “gone down the wrong way” and coughed extensively. She was transferred by ambulance to the emergency room, where it was found that basically nothing was wrong. This was not due to a complication of an abortion.

As statistics show, abortion, whether it be surgical or with medication, is extremely safe. When a very infrequent transfer of an abortion patient to a hospital is required, the hospital physicians are in a good position to care for the woman. It is totally unnecessary for physicians performing abortions to have hospital privileges.

The vast majority of counties in the USA do not have abortion services at present. The legislation proposed in HB 1128 pretends to protect women’s health and safety, but the reality is that it is unnecessary and that its real intent is to decrease women's access to safe abortion services. Please do not support this bill that pretends to be what it is not.