



May 8th, 2023

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am a Rhode Island voter and representative from COYOTE RI writing to you today in strong opposition of S298, S347, S392 & S397

COYOTE In Opposition of Senate Bill 298

This bill would set up special, separate, medically unnecessary requirements for clinics that provide abortion. Onerous licensing standards are something that folks push to try to imply abortion is not safe (totally false) and try to make it harder for facilities to provide care — and in some cases costlier to try to close down options.

Let's be VERY clear these policies are NOT about safety. They are designed to create burdensome and medically unnecessary regulations for abortion clinics that are written with the goal of forcing them to shut down or making it costlier to provide or seek care.

- By imposing regulations that sound technical and bureaucratic to a casual observer, they avoid the kind of widespread public scrutiny that comes with outright bans. Typically cloaked in the language of health care and safety regulations, they don't make anyone safer, either, which is why the American Medical Association and other major health organizations [oppose them](#).
- Having more barriers in place means that some people are unable to access abortion care. It also makes them likelier to get an abortion later in their pregnancy.
- Abortions in the United States are safe and have few complications, according to a [landmark study](#) by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

Questions on Senate Bills 347, 392, and 397 (anti-abortion bills also being heard in Senate Judiciary)

What's wrong with the "born alive" bills? Bills like S347, S392 and S397 are not new. Anti-abortion lawmakers in Congress and around the country have introduced similar bills for years. We should never interfere with doctors and make it harder for health professionals to respect the needs of their patients or ask them to compromise their medical judgment as to what information or treatment is in the best interest of their patient and we should do more to protect every person's right to make their own decision about how to plan their families and futures.

These bills imply that doctors or health professionals who provide abortions would ever withhold care from an infant. It is insulting and dangerous to imply that this is happening. Abortion providers are trained and compassionate professionals doing their best to help patients in spite of frequent harassment and even violence.

These bills are meant to disparage them and to lay the groundwork to take away all access to abortion and we know who that harms most - people who are pushed to the margins who are already struggling to obtain affordable, quality health services. Existing homicide laws would indeed apply to a case of intentionally withholding care. These bills are solving a problem that does not exist.

The term "born alive" is not a term rooted in science or medicine. This disinformation opens the door to allowing politicians to interfere with family decisions about palliative care for an infant who tragically won't survive for long. These families are making the best decision they can in heartbreaking circumstances. That is a problem created by this misguided legislation - and one we should not allow.

Numerous health care organizations, representing thousands of clinicians, oppose these bills including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American College of Nurse-Midwives, and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine have strongly opposed bills that place lawmakers in the position of interfering with reproductive healthcare, including abortion.

Please vote NO on Senate Bills 298 &, 347, 392, and 397

Thank you for your consideration

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COYOTE RI Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, Rhode Island (COYOTE RI) is a group of current and former sex workers and sex trafficking survivors working on policy for improved health and safety for people in Rhode Island's sex industry. Learn more at www.coyoteri.org