

Jody Simpson

From: krysta Daniel [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich
Subject: Please Vote No On SJR4

Hello There,

My name is Krysta Daniel, I am an Alaskan born and raised in Anchorage. Thank you for taking the time to read my email and think over what I have to say. I am writing in to respectfully and wholeheartedly demand that SJR4 be taken off the table and be completely shred; if that's not possible at least VOTE NO ON SJR4.

This resolution deeply offends me as an independent human being, I am unsure why my supposed inalienable rights are *constantly* under attack. I have the right, liberty, and freedom to decide *for myself* what happens to my body, and what will and will not be allowed to be inside of me. If I want to rid myself of cells growing inside my body, feeding off my body, that is my decision alone. If I want an abortion and they are illegal, I'm not going to just say oh darn and raise a whole human being, *I'm going to find a way to get that abortion*. Which we know means finding a wire hanger, or throwing myself downstairs, or any of many other desperate means that women have had to take if the safe option isn't available. So it's pretty obvious to me that this ban isn't about 'ending abortions.'

The only reason to ban abortions is to control people who become pregnant. That's it. Banning abortion will not lower rates of abortions, instead it will just raise rates of unsafe abortions and preventable injury/death in women. Women's healthcare in America is already a disgrace as it is, going out of our way to make that even worse, in the middle of a global health pandemic, is abhorrent. People who become pregnant are wholly human, and we refuse to be treated as anything less than that.

Alaska has a shameful record when it comes to women's health, sex education and sexual and physical violence against women as it is. We should try to change that by becoming a leader, not a follower, in the nation. Take all our states massive failures (High rates of sexual violence, high STD/STI rates, nonexistent fact-based sex education, *and more*) and instead of digging a deeper hole, we should take it as inspiration; clearly we know what does not work so let's try something new.

We know from studies nationally and internationally that if your goal is to lower abortion rates, you need to invest in better sexual education, healthcare, and access to contraceptives, just to name a few. So knowing all of that, to try to frame a ban on abortion as a way to 'save babies' is just insulting. The majority of Alaskans support having access to safe and affordable healthcare, including access to safe abortion care.

I would be happy to continue with more reasons why SJR4 is a shameless attack on women that will take our state backwards not forwards, but I think you get the gist by now.

Your job is to represent your constituents, not to use your position and power to get what you want. Listen to your people, WE DO NOT WANT SJR4 TO PASS. Please do the just and sensible thing, Vote NO on SJR4. (and while you're at it improve our sex ed and healthcare! 😊)

Thank you!

Krysta C. Daniel

Anchorage, AK



Jody Simpson

From: erica watson [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 12:21 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: SJR 4

Senate Health and Social Services Committee,

I'm writing to comment on SJR 4, asking you to oppose this dangerous bill that, if passed, would harm the health and wellbeing of Alaskans, and inhibit the personal freedoms and choices our state and nation purport to value.

Alaskans already face vast disparities in access to healthcare, and as we've seen around the nation and the world, people with financial resources will ALWAYS find a way to access abortion services when they need to. Abortion is and will remain one of the most common medical procedures a person might undergo, and if this government values the wellbeing of its residents, abortion must also remain safe and accessible. We've seen around the nation and around the world that the harder it is to access abortion care, the higher the rates of infant and maternal mortality and other health outcomes, and it is shameful that our own legislators continue to push for this harm rather than working for solutions that empower Alaskans to make their own choices about when and if to continue a pregnancy.

Your constituents need abortions. Your families and friends need abortions (and if you believe they do not, consider whether you've created a relationship where they feel safe telling you). Your neighbors need abortions. You might wish they didn't, or know that you would never choose it for yourself (either due to your own values or your own biology), but if you are not working day and night for affordable, accessible birth control, affordable accessible childcare, and a robust healthcare system that actually supports women and children at every stage of pregnancy and childhood, your job is to keep your opinions about other peoples' bodies to yourself, and get out of the way.

Oppose HJR4.

-Erica Watson

[REDACTED]
Denali Park, AK 99755



March 16, 2021

The Honorable David Wilson, Chair
Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

by email: Senate.Health.And.Social.Services@akleg.gov

Re: ACLU of Alaska Opposition to SJR 4

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair Hughes, and Members of the Senate Health & Social Services Committee:

The ACLU of Alaska opposes Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 4. This resolution's goal is to erode the Alaska Constitution's privacy protections and equal protection guarantees, and to chip away at a woman's right to control her body.

Living a safe and healthy life is a basic right, as is the freedom to define our own path. We aren't truly free if we can't make our own decisions about our bodies, our lives, and our futures—whether that is saying no to unwanted sexual advances, no to an unintended pregnancy, or yes to becoming a parent. When someone decides to have an abortion, it should be safe, affordable, and free from punishment or judgment.

The decision about whether and when to become a parent is one of the most important life decisions we make. When people can make decisions that are best for their lives, families thrive and we build communities where each of us can participate with dignity and equality. When the state denies that ability through restrictions on abortion, however, the harm falls hardest on those struggling financially or those who already face significant barriers to health care, such as high transportation costs and long travel time associated with accessing care for people living in rural Alaska. People who are denied abortion care are more likely to experience poor health outcomes, fall into or remain in poverty, and be unemployed than those who obtain care. SJR 4 would open the door to restrictions that make these outcomes more likely and push safe abortion care further out of reach.

Alaskans are rightly proud of our constitution, which contains robust privacy protections and guarantees of equal protection. These protections include safeguarding a woman's right to decide whether and when to become a mother. The ACLU of Alaska is proud of our decades-long track record successfully litigating unconstitutional laws targeting women's

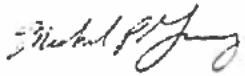
Chair David Wilson
ACLU Opposition to SJR 4
March 16, 2021
Page 2 of 2

reproductive rights. Through these and other cases, the Alaska Supreme Court has made clear that reproductive rights, including the right to abortion, are fundamental rights.ⁱ The State may not infringe on the fundamental privacy right to make reproductive decisions except “when necessary to further a compelling state interest and only if no less restrictive means exist to advance the interest.”ⁱⁱ

We appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns about SJR 4 with the Senate Health and Social Services Committee. We recognize this resolution as an attempt to lower the constitutional guardrails that protect Alaskans’ fundamental right to make reproductive decisions, and to dismantle people’s ability to get safe, legal abortion care. For these reasons, we oppose this resolution and urge the Committee to reject it.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to reach out at mgarvey@acluak.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Garvey
Advocacy Director

ⁱ *Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest v. Alaska* 1997).

ⁱⁱ *State v. Planned Parenthood of Alaska*, 35 P.3d 30, 41 (Alaska 2001).

Jody Simpson

From: Jaime Roth - [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: Letter of Opposition of SJR 4

Dear Health and Social Services Committee of Alaska,

Thank you for your time. My name is Jaime Roth, and I am a resident of Homer, Alaska. I am a fiscally conservative, registered Republican and writing this letter to say that I oppose adoption of the bill SJR 4 that seeks to restrict abortion access. As a 40 year old woman with chronic injuries, a pregnancy and childbirth would be a health concern for me and many other women due to their age and health conditions. Most would see me as a healthy child-bearing woman, who could pop out babies like nobody's business. No thank you. I already have two. My point being there are many women that would suffer more if they did not have unfettered access to abortion. I use birth control, but it is not fail-safe. As an Alaskan, American and lover of freedom, I support a woman's right to choose. When we restrict this right, we treat women as less than fully human, less than capable of making difficult ethical and moral decisions that affect them, their families, and their world.

I oppose this bill for other reasons besides how it affects me personally. The Alaska Supreme Court has affirmed the constitutional protections by making clear that reproductive rights, including the right to abortion, are fundamental rights. Also, states with abortion restrictions tend to have higher rates of infant and maternal mortality in comparison with states with no restrictions.

Thank you again for reading this letter and my opinion. Any humor or light-hearted words I used do not take away my strong opinion on this matter.

I would like to state again that I oppose SJR 4.

With all sincerity and respect,

Jaime Roth

Jody Simpson

From: Sarah-Kathryn Bryan [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 2:24 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: Oppose SJR 4

I am a law student and former abortion clinic manager currently living in Anchorage. I had prepared remarks before this hearing, which I feel compelled to stray from in order to address several misstatements of fact and law made by Senator Hughes.

Roe v. Wade recognizes a substantive right to privacy between a patient and her doctor, not specifically to abortion. The Alaska founders enshrined in the Alaska State Constitution that the people's right to privacy is recognized and shall not be infringed. On its face, Senate Joint Resolution 4 would cause undue confusion because it conflicts directly with other provisions in the Alaska State Constitution, specifically women's equal rights under the law and our right to privacy.

In pertinent part, this Resolution states, "[t]o protect human life, nothing in this constitution may be construed to secure or protect a right to an abortion or require the State to fund an abortion." When I managed an abortion clinic in North Carolina, I encountered patients whose lives depended on their access to safe and affordable healthcare, including therapeutic abortion. A woman's age and myriad medical conditions may make carrying a pregnancy to term a life-threatening physical impossibility. For this reason alone, the Resolution's stated purpose to protect human life is patently incorrect.

Therapeutic abortion ensures that women are able to safely carry a pregnancy to term when they have the medical, financial, and emotional support necessary to do so.

I managed a clinic in North Carolina, where there are parental consent laws as well as a 72 hour waiting period between nurse counseling and a procedure. On a weekly basis, we had to turn patients away who came in with their parents because they did not have the requisite documentation. This sometimes postponed the procedure to the point that a prohibitively expensive procedure was necessary. The policies the sponsors of this resolution wish to create a path for are just an unnecessary hurdle for young women in a difficult and sensitive situation.

The sponsors of the Resolution claim that it will allow voters and legislators to set policy in regards to abortion. Unfortunately, most voters and legislators are not qualified to set healthcare policy that best serves women and children. The "common sense" abortion policy advanced by Senator Hughes does not comport with the medical science.

I sincerely appreciate your time, and hope that you oppose Senate Joint Resolution 4.

Sarah Kathryn Bryan

Jody Simpson

From: Sheila Sine [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 3:42 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: Testimony regarding SJR 4

I'm an Alaskan voter from Anchorage emailing my testimony regarding SJR4. My name is Sheila Sine.

Firstly, despite multiple claims that this bill does not deal with abortion directly, I did not appreciate the obviously biased presentation of the bill, such as when abortion is conjoined with Holocaust atrocities during the outdated Geneva Convention quote. That was incredibly disrespectful.

I oppose SJR4. I was a teenager when the voter initiative to mandate parental notice, as Mr. Leman described, occurred. By his admission and Sen. Reinbold's, it passed. Due to this testimony, it seems to me that there is no need for SJR4. The Alaska legislature is making legislation about abortion and voters are voting on it. If the Alaska Supreme Court is striking it down it's because those policies are **unconstitutional**. SJR4 is useless, it seeks to solve a problem that doesn't exist. The committee's time would be better spent elsewhere.

Finally, speaking for myself, I am an Alaskan voter and I very much want my right to a safe and affordable abortion to be unhampered, should I require such a procedure.

Thank you for your time.

Jody Simpson

From: Ingrid Johnson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:12 AM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: 2021 SJ 4

Dear Senate Health & Social Services Committee,

Individual beliefs on when an abortion is morally acceptable vary dramatically from person to person. I personally do not believe that abortion is murder and would get one were I to become pregnant. I have at least four close friends who have had abortions in Alaska as young women. They are not evil murderers. They are just young women who made choices given their personal beliefs and their life circumstances. Some of them are now mothers.

Restrictions on abortion are an attempt to merge theist religions with governmental powers. Because theist religions view abortion as murder, the intent is to have government codify that belief system. If you truly believe in the foundational concepts of our country, you will respect the separation of church and state and acknowledge that making abortion illegal is forcing a particular, non-universal set of religious beliefs on how others live their lives.

Further, initial restrictions on access to abortion that make it more expensive and time consuming have a differential impact on people based on socioeconomic status. Those who are already marginalized and struggling will see their access to abortion limited first. There is also research on [abortion restrictions being related to higher rates of negative health outcomes for women](#). Finally, there are children waiting in foster homes, and children living in violent, neglectful homes all over Alaska. A more health and social service oriented focus for your committee might be on Alaska's high rates of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and negative health outcomes, and on improving the lives of our most vulnerable children who have already entered the world and are now being failed by our state.

I respect the separation of church and state, and support Alaskans (and everyone's) access to affordable abortions. I encourage you to do the same and reject SJ4.

Ingrid Johnson

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99516

Jody Simpson

From: Meneka Thiru <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:51 AM
To: Sen. David Wilson
Subject: Oppose SJR 4

Dear Senator Wilson,

My name is Meneka and I live in Anchorage and I'm writing to express that I am opposed to SJR 4 because I believe that medical decisions are between a patient and her doctor and should not be legislated by the state.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Meneka Thiru

Re: SJR4

03/16/2021

[REDACTED]
Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear Senator Wilson

Thank you for taking time to read and consider this letter I know your time is valuable and I appreciate that you are looking for input from diverse Alaskans' regarding this legislation.

The proposed constitutional amendment SJR4 up for debate today requires a vigorous and honest debate about more than ideas regarding when life begins and what decisions are moral or safe for women to make. This legislation needs to examine equal access to healthcare including birth control options, support of a livable minimal wage, protection from violence and exploitation of vulnerable populations, options for male contraception, the health risks of carrying a non-viable fetus to term for the mother, adequate education of our youth regarding healthy relationships and birth control, the availability of affordable, safe childcare for parents who have to work and the responsibilities of biological fathers to name but a few topics.

I have been blessed in my life and never had to face the decision of whether to carry a child for whom I was not prepared into this world and I do not want any other woman to face it. The reason I was so lucky was because of resources provided by Planned Parenthood when I needed them, before I had health care insurance and access to private services. Being pro-choice is not the same as being pro-abortion, there are ways to minimize the very need for that choice and removing personal rights to privacy and liberties is not among them. Instead of this proposed constitutional amendment I urge you to make decisions that provide support of optimal care and ways to avoid the need for abortion instead of removal of personal rights.

Sincerely,

Sharoon M Hunter

Jody Simpson

From: Nancy Wold [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 3:04 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Rep. Christopher Kurka
Subject: SJR4 NOT in favor

Hello Senator Wilson and Representative Kurka,

I wanted to write and let you know that I am Not in favor of abortion nor funding to have abortion. Please vote against funding for SJR4.

Thanks,
Nancy Wold
Wasilla, AK

Jody Simpson

From: MA Nickles <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 7:04 PM
To: Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: SJR 4 must be aborted

To: Senate HSS committee members

This Senate Joint Resolution 4 would take Alaska back to the dark ages when women had to find illegal ways to prevent a birth that might endanger their physical or mental health. With the best of intentions a pregnancy can begin by mistake or it could be forced on a woman. Either way that woman should be allowed to consult with her doctor and those two people, with no interference legal or otherwise, should be able to make the correct decision for all concerned.

Mary Ann Nickles
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Lisa Hart

From: Meneka Thiru [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:51 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Oppose SJR 4

Dear Senator Hughes,

My name is Meneka and I live in Anchorage and I'm writing to express that I am opposed to SJR 4 because I believe that medical decisions are between a patient and her doctor and should not be legislated by the state.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Meneka Thiru

March 16, 2021

Senator David Wilson
Chair of the Senate Health and Social Services
Alaska Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

Senator Wilson,

Thank you for the time to testify today in opposition to Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 4.
A typed copy of my oral testimony follows.

Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, my name is Mary Elizabeth Kehrhahn-Stark. I live in Senate District B and I am representing myself. I oppose SJR 4, a proposed constitutional amendment that would erode the Alaska's Constitution privacy protection.

In my opinion, SJR 4 is an example of what right to life supporters in our legislative body want so badly to accomplish, that is to abolish a woman's right to privacy in her thoughts and actions. By permanently changing our Constitution, our legislature would be able to decide a citizen's right, opportunity, and protection under the law.

The reality is that ultimately, the most affected by this proposed amendment are the most vulnerable members of our communities, since the typical abortion patient is disproportionately single, very poor—living at 100-199% of the federal poverty level, and low income—living at less than the federal poverty level. The current poverty level for an Alaskan household of 1 is \$15,950. The result of an unwanted birth to this single female Alaskan assigns her as a head of her household with children, making her a member of the largest population group living in poverty in the United States.

On a more personal note, I am 64 years old now, but during another time in my life, I was young, and barely supporting myself. I was going to school to hopefully secure a better life for myself and for my community. I had to make this decision to continue, but I knew then, as I know now, it was the best decision of my life. I thank God that abortion was a safe, legal option because at the time, I knew I was not ready emotionally and financially to be a mother of a child.

I plead that you reject SJR 4, because each Alaskan, regardless of financial status, deserves the opportunity to control their own life at the most basic level, that is control of their own bodies, their own family, and their own life choices.

Thank you for your time and respected consideration of my thoughts.
Mary Elizabeth Kehrhahn-Stark

Lisa Hart

From: Ann Rappoport [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 10:26 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich; Sen. David Wilson
Subject: Vote NO on SJR 4 which would take away Alaskan's rights!

Dear Senators –

I am appalled that once again, your valuable time is being taken up by a completely unnecessary, illogical, illegal, and harmful proposed piece of legislation: SJR 4. Contrary to the many decades upheld Supreme Court decision of Roe v. Wade and the Alaska Constitution's privacy clause, some are trying to again worm their way into a woman's body and her most personal choices.

This proposed amendment would set the stage to ban abortions in Alaska. If an Alaskan personally opposes an abortion, fine, that is their choice and their body. But others, particularly men, have no right to impose that very personal choice on the very personal choice of what another may find at some time a necessary choice for them.

Abortion is perhaps the most difficult choice a person ever makes . . . except perhaps in cases of rape, incest, other violence, or risk to the life of that woman. And then, are there people jumping up to care for the future life they may doom some woman to carry? If that fetus was created while someone was addicted to drugs or alcohol, does the state have resources ready to pay for the medical, emotional, and other tremendous social service costs that may result from a person being forced to carry a fetus to term that may be born in a condition requiring extensive medical or psychological or other interventions in order to thrive. If someone does not want to be pregnant, will they eat healthy, not smoke or drink, or do they even have access to healthy food and knowledge on how to produce a healthy baby?

Are those working so vehemently to prevent abortions also so enthusiastically speaking up to adopt the babies who would instead need to be adopted? Too many of these babies would each likely need hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical and social services care throughout their lives. That will be the expected fate of fetuses born addicted to drugs through a drug addicted mother, born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and subsequent learning, social, and emotional challenges, or those which may be brought up in an abusive, violent, or unloving atmosphere. Our Governor and Legislature have already significantly cut funding for health and social services – raising this amendment and its potential passage would result in a huge unfunded mandate.

Nor does there seem to be any concern for the poor woman who would be forced to go through this trauma, after making a tremendously difficult decision to pursue an abortion she cannot safely have. Why is the Legislature considering a bill that will push the government into a woman's body and her most personal decision? Our State Constitution has, from its inception, protected an individual's right to privacy, a right of which all Alaskans have been proud and protective since statehood. Thus, the Legislature has no business raising an amendment that would interfere with a woman's decision that has resulted from an accident, a mistake, or is the result of an act of violence or other abuse.

Your Committee time, and the time of the Legislature as a whole would be much better spent balancing our State budget, fully funding education for all our children, and addressing overall public safety, rather than on the personal issues of a few women. Shame on you if you vote to approve this bill. Please vote **no** on SJR 4 now, and do not consider raising or passing anything similar!

Sincerely,

Ann Rappoport

[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99516

P.S. I regret that a previously scheduled medical appointment prevents me from presenting these comments at today's hearing on SJR 4.

Lisa Hart

From: no-reply@alaskasenate.org
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 3:06 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Email Your Senator Form Submission

There has been a submission of the form Email Your Senator through your website.

Your Senator
Shelley Hughes

Your Name
Misty Ott

Your Email or Phone
[REDACTED]

Question or Concern

SJR 4 is a disgusting attempt at government overreach. Go back to Ohio and keep your politics out of Alaskan women's bodies.

IP Address

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Lisa Hart

From: Jessica Limbird [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 5:05 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich
Cc: Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Opposition to SJR 4

To the members of the Health and Social Services Committee,

I was unable to attend today's hearing to provide testimony in opposition to eliminating my constitutional right to abortion. I am typing this out after work, before I provide care for my eleven-year-old child with disabilities as a single parent, meet with the board president of the organization I volunteer with, and try to squeeze in some self-care in the middle of a global pandemic.

When I was twenty, I had an abortion. While it was one of the most difficult choices I've made in this life, it's also one that I am always grateful to have been able to make. I was too young and not ready to raise a child. I am also an adopted person and intimately understand the trauma that comes with parental separation at birth via adoption. It was not a choice I was willing to make for what would have been my child, had I carried that pregnancy to term.

Despite my personal experience, access to abortion is a human right and at times a medical necessity. Not all women can safely carry to term. Not all want to. There is no religious argument to be made, because of the separation of church and state. But if I were to appeal to your morality, it would ask- what is the value of merely giving birth to a child but not giving a life to one? Without health care (Alaska Legislature continually attempts to and cuts back Medicaid), without education (Alaska Legislature has not raised the student base allocation in years and cut UA's budget by millions), without housing, what life are we offering to children we would force to be born without the basic supports needed to survive, not to mention thrive?

If this resolution isn't eliminating the right to abortion, just the funding mechanisms that make it accessible to women on limited incomes, I would argue that eliminating state-sponsored healthcare funding for abortion effectively eliminates access to abortion for low-income or no-income women. I haven't reviewed the Kids Count data recently, but I would estimate around 25% of households in Alaska are single female parent households. The responsibility of parenting falls on women socially and economically. Putting the burden of funding the choice to family plan on women is patriarchal and gross.

It appalls me that this resolution is being entertained. I can only hope it is politicking to garner favor in the eyes of constituents and that no one actually hopes that we can move forward with eliminating my legal right to access abortion in Alaska. I stand with every person in our state who has had an abortion, will need to have one or wants to have one.

I ask that you do what's in the best interest of women across Alaska and not move this resolution forward past committee.

Respectfully,

Jessica Limbird
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99504

Lisa Hart

From: Terrie Irwin [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 7:15 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Proposed abortion legislation

Senator Hughes, how dare you! The Supreme Court has passed laws that have been upheld time and time again regarding Roe V Wade. It really pisses me off that you're spending time trying to overturn this at a state level. IT'S NOT YOUR BUSINESS TO TELL A WOMAN WHAT TO DO WITH HER BODY. PERIOD. If Republicans would spend as much time trying to help women and children AFTER a child is born with resources to make them successful as you do trying to stop abortions the world would be a better place. What about the children born of rape and incest and the many other reasons that a woman might need to have an abortion? Medical reasons! I am a woman who believes in pro-choice. I am not one who proposes abortion as a means of birth control. In fact I got pregnant when I was 16 years old. My Catholic Mother wanted me to have an abortion and I refused. That baby I had at 16 is now almost 50. It was MY choice!!! Not my Mothers, not yours, not Mitch McConnell's, not the father, MINE!

Simply Senator Hughes, the state of Alaska has BIGGER problems than you trying to tell women what to do with their bodies. It's really not your business.

Terrie Irwin

Sent from my iPad

Re: SJR4

03/16/2021

[REDACTED]

Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear Senator Hughes,

Thank you for taking time to read and consider this letter I know your time is valuable and I appreciate that you are looking for input from diverse Alaskans' regarding this legislation.

The proposed constitutional amendment SJR4 up for debate today requires a vigorous and honest debate about more than ideas regarding when life begins and what decisions are moral or safe for women to make. This legislation needs to examine equal access to healthcare including birth control options, support of a livable minimal wage, protection from violence and exploitation of vulnerable populaces, options for male contraception, the health risks of carrying a non-viable fetus to term for the mother, adequate education of our youth regarding healthy relationships and birth control, the availability of affordable, safe childcare for parents who have to work and the responsibilities of biological fathers to name but a few topics.

I have been blessed in my life and never had to face the decision of whether to carry a child for whom I was not prepared into this world and I do not want any other woman to face it. The reason I was so lucky was because of resources provided by Planned Parenthood when I needed them, before I had health care insurance and access to private services. Being pro-choice is not the same as being pro-abortion, there are ways to minimize the very need for that choice and removing personal rights to privacy and liberties is not among them. Instead of this proposed constitutional amendment I urge you to make decisions that provide support of optimal care and ways to avoid the need for abortion instead of removal of personal rights.

Sincerely,

Sharoon M Hunter

Lisa Hart

From: linda heck <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 7:32 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: SJR 4 concerns

Senator Shelley Hughes:

Thank you for your service to Alaska and for considering my SJR 4 opposition concerns below.

I oppose SJR 4, regarding a constitutional amendment criminalizing abortion care in Alaska. SJR4 will diminish the Alaska Constitution's, and the Alaska Supreme Court's, privacy protections and guarantees of an Alaskan's right to abortion care.

Alaska has some of the highest rates of sexual, domestic, and child abuse in the country. Eliminating Alaska's constitutional rights regarding abortion care would place more Alaskans at risk every day. Consider sexual assault victim Ashley Johnson-Barr (Kotzebue), and the many unreported sexual assaults that occur in Alaska each day. Consider the family struggling to get out of poverty that has an unplanned pregnancy due to the inherent imperfections of birth control methods – even if perfectly using two methods simultaneously. Consider that Alaska prides itself on individual rights that this bill puts at risk. Without access to abortion care, these (and all) Alaskans would lose the personal right to manage their own health, lives and future.

I strongly oppose SJR 4 for its restrictions to abortion care and Alaskans' personal rights.

Sincerely,

Linda Heck
Fairbanks, AK 99709
House District 4/Senate District B

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Lisa Hart

From: Laura Green [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 6:23 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich
Cc: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson
Subject: SJR 4 testimony

Senators,

I respectfully submit my strong opposition to SJR 4.

I do not support any amendment to the Alaska Constitution that does not protect fully our right to obtain or reject medical treatment without government interference into our personal, private decisions. Senator Hughes' SJR 4 would amend the Alaska Constitution to eliminate our constitutional right to an abortion. Termination of a pregnancy is often a necessary and vital form of reproductive health care for women. I personally know several women - women who desperately wanted to start or expand their own families - that needed to have an abortion as a valid health procedure to protect their own lives. One of whom without abortion, would have had to carry a fetus with no brain to term at a great personal mental health cost to her, her husband, and their toddler at the time. Given that you cannot create legislation that accounts for all the myriad of valid cases where abortions should be accessible, we must continue to trust Alaska women and doctors. The Alaska Constitution was purposefully founded with strong protections of our right to privacy as Alaska citizens, there is nothing - especially not any serious public health driver - that indicated we should lessen those rights.

Thank you,
Laura
Anchorage AK resident (99517)

Lisa Hart

From: Analise [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 5:33 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Opposing SJR 4

Dear Senator Hughes,

I am writing the Senate Health and Social Services Committee to express my strongest possible opposition to the recently proposed amendment to the State Constitution, SJR 4 relating to abortion.

Access to safe medical treatment is a fundamental human right and no person, group, or entity, including the government of the State of Alaska, has the right or responsibility to interfere in private healthcare decisions.

Please protect our citizens and keep abortion care safe and legal in Alaska.

Thank you,
Analise Hartnett Goedeke
Homer, AK

Lisa Hart

From: Katherine Ellison <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 5:57 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich
Subject: SR 4

Hughes, Wilson, Reinbold, Begich and Costello,

I am a third generation Alaskan, I am also a mother to 3 daughters. What Hughes is proposing through SJ 4 is an insult to Alaskan's, not just women. I suggest you 4 really look at what average everyday Alaskan's are going through right now. Rehashing a topic that our Alaska Supreme Court has already ruled on is not just irresponsible, it's insulting.

My husband and I didn't need Wilson, Hughes, Reinbold or Costello in the doctor's office with us, and my daughters certainly don't either. Especially when Reinbold can't even be bothered to follow simple health protocols that are required of Anchorage Kindergarteners.

Alaskan's need the Health Social Service Committee to actually do the work that is necessary during a global PANDEMIC, not rehashing the failed culture wars of the 1990's. Be better and work on issues that Alaskan's need during 2021. Good Grief.

Katherine Ellison
[REDACTED]

99502

Lisa Hart

From: krysta Daniel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich
Subject: Please Vote No On SJR4

Hello There,

My name is Krysta Daniel, I am an Alaskan born and raised in Anchorage. Thank you for taking the time to read my email and think over what I have to say. I am writing in to respectfully and wholeheartedly demand that SJR4 be taken off the table and be completely shred; if that's not possible at least VOTE NO ON SJR4.

This resolution deeply offends me as an independent human being, I am unsure why my supposed inalienable rights are *constantly* under attack. I have the right, liberty, and freedom to decide *for myself* what happens to my body, and what will and will not be allowed to be inside of me. If I want to rid myself of cells growing inside my body, feeding off my body, that is my decision alone. If I want an abortion and they are illegal, I'm not going to just say oh darn and raise a whole human being, *I'm going to find a way to get that abortion*. Which we know means finding a wire hanger, or throwing myself downstairs, or any of many other desperate means that women have had to take if the safe option isn't available. So it's pretty obvious to me that this ban isn't about 'ending abortions.'

The only reason to ban abortions is to control people who become pregnant. That's it. Banning abortion will not lower rates of abortions, instead it will just raise rates of unsafe abortions and preventable injury/death in women. Women's healthcare in America is already a disgrace as it is, going out of our way to make that even worse, in the middle of a global health pandemic, is abhorrent. People who become pregnant are wholly human, and we refuse to be treated as anything less than that.

Alaska has a shameful record when it comes to women's health, sex education and sexual and physical violence against women as it is. We should try to change that by becoming a leader, not a follower, in the nation. Take all our states massive failures (High rates of sexual violence, high STD/STI rates, nonexistent fact-based sex education, *and more*) and instead of digging a deeper hole, we should take it as inspiration; clearly we know what does not work so let's try something new.

We know from studies nationally and internationally that if your goal is to lower abortion rates, you need to invest in better sexual education, healthcare, and access to contraceptives, just to name a few. So knowing all of that, to try to frame a ban on abortion as a way to 'save babies' is just insulting. The majority of Alaskans support having access to safe and affordable healthcare, including access to safe abortion care.

I would be happy to continue with more reasons why SJR4 is a shameless attack on women that will take our state backwards not forwards, but I think you get the gist by now.

Your job is to represent your constituents, not to use your position and power to get what you want. Listen to your people, WE DO NOT WANT SJR4 TO PASS. Please do the just and sensible thing, Vote NO on SJR4. (and while you're at it improve our sex ed and healthcare! 😊)

Thank you!

Krysta C. Daniel

Anchorage, AK



Lisa Hart

From: Joan Clover [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 7:33 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Tom Begich
Subject: SJR 4

Senators Wilson, Hughes, Costello, Reinbold, and Begich:

While I sincerely favor birth control over abortion--who wouldn't--I adamantly oppose the government telling women what they can and cannot do with their bodies. Enduring an unwanted pregnancy is both taxing to the body and mind and no one should be compelled to be a broodmare against their will.

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Sincerely, Joan Clover

Lisa Hart

From: Deborah Burlinski [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2021 2:15 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Re: News from Hughes February 9, 2021

Ms. Hughes - I strongly object to your sponsorship of a law prohibiting abortion. In the U.S. we believe in individual rights including the right to freedom of religion and freedom of choice. As you are aware, Roe v. Wade allows unrestricted abortion only in the first 3 months of pregnancy during which time there is a couple cells thrown together that are smaller than the head of a pin. Claiming that is a baby is really stretching it. While I do not believe abortion is the best route for mothers, it is not up to us to judge other women or make it so they go back to using coat hangers to abort a baby. Myself and my friends will not vote for ANYONE who supports a law that violates the provision of Roe v. Wade.

Your constituent.
Deborah Burlinski
Palmer, AK

On Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 7:04 AM Senator Shelley Hughes <sen.shelley.hughes@akleg.gov> wrote:

If compact formatting and dark photo caption boxes fail to appear in your email, please click link to view a much better version.

[View this email in your browser](#)

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This weekend I had the privilege to electronically participate in the annual Youth Advocacy Institute panel discussion with students from all over the state. Students had an opportunity to engage with about a half dozen legislators to ask questions regarding the issues most important to them.

During the meeting, I introduced my aide, Dawson Mann, to the youth. Dawson participated in student government in both high school and college, and I thought he might inspire students to consider what opportunities might await them in the future.

Lisa Hart

From: Erick Borling <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 4:00 AM
To: Rep. DeLena Johnson; Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Vote NO on SJR4

Representative Johnson and Senator Hughes,

I'm Erick Borling of [REDACTED]
Wasilla, AK 99654

I oppose SJR4 and mark that it is just one more confirmation of many instances of failed leadership in Alaska, and prolongs the suffering of Alaskans by frittering away the legislative docket on a radical-right culture-war agenda that has nothing to do with any known problems, of which we face many. In that context, the mere introduction of this bill is a slap in the face to me personally and you owe me an apology for this bill, for failing to do your job making Alaska less of a haven for unresponsive / undeveloped bureaucracy that makes every interaction onerous, and the culture is largely anti-mask, revealing the tragic fact of an unsafe, out of control community of selfish people as I discovered last year.

SJR 4 would amend the Alaska Constitution to open the door to bans on safe, legal abortion.

The Alaska Supreme Court has affirmed the state's constitution that guarantees reproductive rights including the right to abortion are fundamental rights. When someone decides to have an abortion, it should be safe, affordable, and free from punishment or judgment.

SJR 4 would only endanger people's health. In fact, states with more abortion restrictions tend to have higher rates of maternal and infant mortality than those without restrictions, among other poor health outcomes.

Living a safe and healthy life is a basic right – as is the freedom to define our path. We aren't truly free if we can't make our own decisions about our bodies, lives, and futures.

Vote NO on SJR4, and get to work on issues of economic impact to everyone, not just the rich and powerful.

-Erick Borling

Lisa Hart

From: Zoe Belle [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 12:20 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Financial Concerns with SJR 4 - Public Testimony

Vice Chair of Health and Social Services, Shelley Hughes,

My name is Zoe Cramer, and I am a voter who lives in Homer, Alaska.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my testimony with an open mind and heart.

I was born in Homer, Alaska, to a mother and father that had met a month before my conception. At the time, they were living in a tent on the Kenai River, and both were working as seasonal employees at a bait shop. When my mom realized she was pregnant, even though she had no steady income, house, and had just moved to the state, she decided to have a baby. Well, my mom and dad weren't in love, and a child, as some of you might know, doesn't always make a relationship stronger. So I've grown up with mixed families: step-parents, step-siblings, half-siblings. And I've also grown up in poverty. The government paid for my school lunches, clothes, school supplies, field trips, health insurance, and everything in between. I have leaned on government support since the moment I was born, through my physical conditions as a child and through my mental conditions as a teenager and young adult, of which I am very fortunate for those government programs. I am also very fortunate to have family, although not cohesive and not always financially stable, a family that wants me in their lives and chooses to support me.

And I am not here today to argue my moral or religious opinions on abortion. Everyone has most likely come to their own conclusions, and so I'm not going to change your mind on that. Instead, I would like you all to think about the financial implications of bill SJR 4.

The bill states,

"To protect human life, nothing in this constitution may be construed to secure or protect a right to an abortion or require the State to fund an abortion."

So I'd love to quickly share some statistics of who's receiving abortions, who is paying for them, and what happens after a child who is not wanted by their family is born.

So let's go into what statistical group of Alaskans are receiving abortions.

The majority, 60%, of people receiving abortions are in their 20s. I think we all understand why someone in their 20s might not want children—college, career, travel, not being financially stable. In fact, 75% of patients receiving an abortion were low income. 49% living under the poverty line, 26% living with half or 1/4th of the budget of someone living on the poverty line. So ¾ people receiving abortions are not financially stable enough to take care of a child. Which, in the first year, averages \$13,000. The poverty line in a two-person household is \$21,770. The poverty line of a one-person household is 16,090. I trust you all can understand why that might be a problem.

Because of these numbers, one might assume that then most abortions are paid for by Medicaid, a government health insurance funded by both the federal and state government. However, most patients, 53% pay out-of-pocket, while only 24% were paid for by Medicaid.

So let's picture a world where abortion is unavailable for these low-income, young adults. They could find a family to adopt their baby or have the baby go to a foster care family. And this is really what I am concerned about for those who want to keep government spending at a minimum. Every year there are about 1500 abortions in Alaska. An abortion can cost anywhere from 75 dollars to a thousand, depending on many factors.

While every month, there are around 3,000 children in the Alaskan foster care system. Foster care families receive about \$90 a day per child and about 1500 dollars for completing the training and receiving the certificates that the state requires. Just some quick math, 3,000 times 90 times 365 days a year \$98,550,000. And that's not counting extra funding provided for their school, health care, and so forth.

Now I'm not in favor of reducing people down to numbers, and I personally have benefited greatly from government programs. However, I know many people in our state genuinely care about being fiscally conservative and saving our government funding for things like roads, public services like local government, police, firefighters, and so on.

These kids that grow up in the foster care system go through a lot of trauma. They likely have lived with multiple families, moving around a lot, and not ever truly knowing who will take care of them. Except, one thing that is consistent in their lives is government funding. These children, who turn into adults in our society, are majorly disadvantaged and are more prone to unemployment, homelessness, drug use, chronic illness, and illegal activity that often leads to jail or prison. Although I'm sure people here know of children who got lucky and found a family that accepted them and will love and cherish them well after they turn 18. There are many more who are not as lucky.

It's sad to face the reality, of unwanted children, without families to lean on in times of crisis. It's very heartbreaking to see that their central support system becomes our federal and state government programs. And I know it's not pleasant to think about, but the numbers tell us that these children, then teenagers, then adults, then seniors will end up costing our state government millions of dollars a year. In comparison, abortions end up costing a couple thousand, not even coming close to a million. And I apologize if I come off as lacking humanity, I do genuinely empathize with those who were not as lucky as me to have parents who, despite their young age, financial situation, and health, chose to raise me.

But returning to the bill language itself, "to protect human life." I'd like us all to contemplate what this truly means. Because although I do believe that I and everyone here has a right to live. I believe living, being alive, is not enough. People need shelter, support systems, food, clean water, hobbies, an education. And if you are willing to amend our state constitution, ensuring that the law does not "secure or protect the right to abortion," then you inherently must be willing to fund the care and protection of those thousands of children. You must be willing to pay for their basic human needs so that they too can become productive, contributing citizens of our beautiful state.

Thank you for your time and energy,
Zoe Cramer Homer, Alaska

Lisa Hart

From: Shayla Agli - [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 10:33 AM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Subject: Abortion ban

Dear senator Shelly ,

if you agree with the proposed abortion ban you will be turning your back on a lot of Alaskan women. It is not your decision or anybody's else's decision to decide what a woman can and can't do her body it's up to the person who inhabits the body. Alaska has a high rates of sexual assault banishing abortion would force women who get impregnated by their rapist to keep those children they didn't choose to have . It would also cause an arise in unsafe alternatives for abortion. The abortion ban would cause more harm than good, in the first 3 months that "baby" is nothing more than a clump of cells. Are you really going to protect a clump of cells rather than the women of Alaska ? Keep abortion legal so women can have access to safe abortions for what ever reason they may have.

Thank you for the consideration,
Shayla Agli from anchorage Alaska.

Lisa Hart

From: Carolyn "Care" Clift [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 6:41 PM
To: Sen. Shelley Hughes
Cc: Sen. Roger Holland
Subject: SJR 4

Dear Sen. Hughes:

I was just checking my email and I saw something about SJR 4 today. As you might remember, I am a libertarian* who ran as an independent for Senate this year. I want to register as opposed to SJR 4.

Alaska was one of the first states to allow legal abortion, a few years before the famous Roe v. Wade. Alaskans, and especially Alaskan women, value their independence and their ability to support themselves and their families, WITHOUT INTERFERENCE OR MONEY FROM THE STATE. They value their privacy. What you are planning is to force women to be subservient to the state and have no choice in their lives or careers.

Not only that, in a party that claims to want to cut the spending of the Department of Health and Social Services, you are obligating the state to finance the birth and support of over a thousand new children every year. Just one birth costs a minimum of \$10,000-15,000, so we are talking millions of dollars for the births alone, and much more to pay for the prematernal care and support of mother and child.

My personal belief is that I could never choose an abortion, and I never did. 95% of all mothers feel the same way as I do. I ask you to consider that 5% of women who are desperately conflicted about how they will support themselves and a child, how they are considering their jobs or careers, and how it is possible that they have no desire to have a continuing relationship with the fathers of the offspring. We already have an overburdened Office of Children's Services and foster care system, too.

Had I been elected, I would be caucusing with the "nonbinding" caucus that supports the Permanent Fund Dividend. I appreciate that Roger Holland will be representing my District N on these issues. We did disagree on the pro-life issue (and probably others!) because, unlike Republicans and Democrats, I am pro-liberty on everything!

Now, I haven't read the full statement on SJR 4, but the state has the constitutional right to offer third-trimester liberty to the fetus. But any time in the first and second trimesters, the mother should have a choice about her own life. So if I have misunderstood the goal of this SJR, I apologize.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Carolyn "Care" Clift

Cc: Sen. Holland

*Recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, we believe that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration.---LP.org 2020 Platform 1.5

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10