



Heal Without Harm

ETHICAL RESEARCH COALITION

Heal Without Harm is a coalition of organizations and citizens dedicated to working with the scientific community to encourage it toward ethical research. The coalition is composed of member organizations, including: Wisconsin Right to Life, Wisconsin Catholic Conference, Wisconsin Family Action and Pro-Life Wisconsin, among others.



Heal Without Harm Coalition – Wisconsin Catholic Conference, Pro-Life Wisconsin, Wisconsin Family Action, Wisconsin Right to Life

Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee

RE: SB 422

Thursday, November 2nd, 2017

Distinguished members of the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. The Heal Without Harm Coalition consists of four organizations: Wisconsin Right to Life – represented by its Legislative Director Chelsea Duffy, Wisconsin Catholic Conference – represented by its Executive Director Kim Wadas, Wisconsin Family Action – represented by its President Julaine Appling, and Pro-Life Wisconsin – represented by its Legislative Director Matt Sande.

The Heal Without Harm Coalition has three main concerns about SB 422.

First, SB 422 maintains the trade and use of aborted fetal body parts. Looking closely at the language of the bill, SB 422 only prohibits profiteering from the acquisition of aborted fetal tissue. Non-profits can still obtain aborted fetal tissue from other non-profits, meaning that research institutions within the state of Wisconsin could acquire tissue from an out-of-state non-profit institution. This is still trading aborted fetal tissue, just across state lines instead of directly between an abortion facility and a research institution. Also, this assumes that experimentation on the remains of aborted fetal body parts will still continue within Wisconsin. While we applaud the effort to end profiteering from abortion-derived fetal tissue, we remain strongly opposed to the continued trade and use of the body parts of aborted children.

Second, SB 422 retains criminal penalties on persons who violate the provisions of SB 422 – which includes individual researchers. We discovered, through conversation with medical researchers, that not all medical researchers are aware of the source of the tissues they use for research. Therefore, we would caution against instituting criminal penalties against persons, which includes individuals, due to this lack of knowledge. Often, institutions are aware of the source of tissues used, when individual researchers are not. Researchers should not be penalized for using abortion-derived fetal tissue when they are not even aware of its source. Since institutions cannot be jailed, civil forfeitures against institutions seem the most appropriate type of penalty for this situation.

Third and finally, SB 422 makes a significant exemption for those developing pharmaceutical products. Pharmaceuticals is too sizable a field of medical research to leave entirely untouched. The dependence on tissue derived from the abortion industry legitimizes abortion, creates a demand for it, and further embeds it in our educational and medical institutions. In no matter what field aborted fetal tissue is used, we must, and can, find a better way than relying on the destruction of unborn children.

Thank you so much for your time,

The Heal Without Harm Coalition