

House Health Policy: Committee Hearing 9/14/23

Support: HBs 4949-4959

To Chair Rogers, Vice Chairs Whitsett and VanderWall, and the distinguished members of the committee,

My name is Andrew Seiler and I am a practicing pediatrician in Ann Arbor. Thank you to Chair Julie Rogers and members of this committee for offering Michiganders the opportunity to share my views about the importance of the Reproductive Health Act.

By passing Proposal 3, Michiganders made it abundantly clear that they believe women should be able to make their own decisions about their bodies, without political interference.

From our perspective as doctors, we firmly support and advocate for our patients' full freedom to make their own independent health care decisions, in consultation with their doctors. Our relationships with our patients are built on trust and an open line of communication. The women we treat expect doctors and providers to give our expert medical advice based on medical evidence and our professional experience.

While Proposal 3 protects a woman's access to abortion and preserves her medical freedom in the face of the end of Roe v. Wade, the fact is many barriers still remain that effectively prevent women who choose to have an abortion from actually getting one.

In Michigan, we still have laws that interfere with our patients' ability to get the information and access to care they need. These restrictions require our patients to receive biased, medically unnecessary information before accessing care under the guise of "informed consent."

While informed consent is a bedrock principle in the practice of medicine, Michigan's law requiring patients to get information about abortion opens the door to the spread of misleading information, such as when counseling materials [falsely assert only negative](#) emotional consequences of abortion. The requirement that doctors provide so-called "counseling" materials to patients seeking an abortion is not just unnecessary, it is undignified.

Everyone must have the freedom to make their own personal decisions without interference or coercion from those who want to control their bodies and lives. By passing the RHA, Michigan lawmakers can help ensure access to safe, legal abortion in Michigan, and protect women's freedom to make personal health care decisions without interference from politicians or coercion.

Thank you.

Dr. Andrew Seiler, pediatrician in Ann Arbor, MI