



February 1, 2023

Dear Legislator:

We, as member organizations of the Empowered Families Coalition, are in solid support of HB297, VICTIM SERVICES AMENDMENTS – sponsored by Representative Kera Birkeland.

HB 297 provides compassionate support and services to a woman who has suffered the trauma of rape while recognizing that an unborn child conceived in rape as the second victim.

Services for rape victims include a hot line, free emergency contraception, free medical care and free mental health care. Sexual assault is a horrific and traumatizing crime. Providing immediate support to survivors of this injustice is essential in helping them successfully recover.

HB 297 provides for life affirming provisions in the event of a pregnancy resulting from rape. An abortion cannot be performed due to rape on an unborn baby 18 weeks gestation or older. If a child is born as a result of rape, health care for that child will be provided until the child is one year of age.

Law enforcement is required create a policy for handling sexual assault investigations and reporting requirements are established.

Sexual assault is a horrific and traumatizing crime. Providing immediate support to survivors of this injustice is essential in helping them successfully recover. When a rape results in a pregnancy there is a second innocent victim.

The Empowered Families Coalition:

Agency-Based
Education
Big Ocean Women
Celebration of
Marriage Citizens
for Families
Citizens for Strong
Families
Family Watch Int'l
Utah)
Gathering Families
Homemakers of
America

The Leadership
Foundation Liberty
Moms
Loving Liberty
Moms for America
Principled Liberty
Foundation Principles of
Freedom Forum
Ruth Institute
Sisters of Liberty
Strengthen Utah Families
Sustainable Families Group
United Families International

United Women's Forum -
Davis
United Women's Forum - SL
United Women's Forum - Utah
Utah County Republican
Assembly
Utah Eagle Forum
Utah Republican Women's
Liberty Caucus
Worldwide Organization for
Women (WOW)
Your Health



**HB297 Victim Services Amendments
(Supporting Survivors of Assault)
Sponsored by: Rep Kera Birkeland**

What Would It Do?

- Protects an unborn child 18 weeks or older gestational age from abortion based on rape or incest in most cases.
- Provides free health care for the child of a victim of rape who becomes pregnant until the child is 1 year old.
- Provides free emergency contraception to victims of sexual assault (only within 72 hours of the assault)
- Provides free health care to a victim of rape who becomes pregnant.
- Provides free mental health counseling and other services to a victim of rape.
- Requires a physician performing an abortion under the rape exception to verify that the assault was reported to law enforcement and report it to the health department.

Why We Support this Bill

Sexual assault is a horrific and traumatizing crime. Providing immediate support to survivors of this injustice is essential in helping women successfully recover. When a rape results in a pregnancy there is a second innocent victim.

We support providing services to women in the aftermath of this trauma. In the event that a woman becomes pregnant as the result of a sexual assault, this bill helps a woman choose life by providing much needed medical care for mother and baby during pregnancy and for a full year afterwards.

Pro-Life Utah SUPPORTS HB297