

Thank you, Judge Biscoe and Commissioners.

Thank you, Commissioner Eckhardt, for offering the resolution commemorating the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade and affirming our community's belief that fundamental decisions about whether or not to bear a child is central to a woman's life, wellbeing and dignity, and that when a government attempts to control that decision for her, she is being treated as less than a full adult human to be trusted with her own decisions.

- In bringing forth this resolution, you are taking a stand against those who don't want abortion to be accessible or even legal at all, and who have limited access to abortion and contraception.

The Austin American Statesman last week urged counties to seek federal dollars directly, and avoid going through the bad policy that emanates from our legislature and governor's office, and I'd urge you to keep that in mind as you work on Medicaid 1115 waiver plans and implementation.

In 2011, more than 200,000 women received preventative healthcare services through the state family planning budget. In 2012, because of budget cuts that number was reduced to approx. 75,000. This is important at the county level because those 125 thousand women did not receive screenings for cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and a host of other ailments that an annual exam would reveal. When those ailments become acute, they end up at county hospitals where the treatment of a manageable disease would have been far easier and less expensive had it been caught earlier. Expressing support for this access to health care is good for the fiscal health of the county, its taxpayers and its citizens who need access to healthcare.

So not only does this resolution affirm that a woman should be able to make her own health care decisions without government interference, no matter what kind of insurance she uses and no matter which doctor she chooses to see or which clinic she goes to, it expresses that a woman's rights should not depend on the size of her wallet.