

Two Huge Right to Life Issues Before State Legislature This Week

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This week, the state legislature will take up two crucial pieces of legislation of great interest to the right to life movement.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, February 27, the Senate Committee on Health, Human Services, Insurance and Job Creation will take up SB 398, legislation that would repeal Wisconsin's long-standing ban on abortion. Wisconsin Right to Life strongly opposes SB 398.

On Thursday, February 28, the State Assembly will vote on AB 710, the *Wisconsin Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act*, which is authored by Rep. Jim Ott (R-Mequon) and Rep. Tony Staskunas (D-West Allis). Wisconsin Right to Life strongly supports AB 710.

SB 398

In commenting on SB 398, Wisconsin Right to Life Executive Director Barbara Lyons said, "Wisconsin's abortion ban, s. 940.04, is the most important thing we have to protect unborn children in Wisconsin. On the day *Roe v. Wade* is finally gone, Wisconsin will be one of the first states in the nation to shut down its abortion clinics. That is, as long as our abortion ban stays on the books."

Pro-abortion organizations continue to promote the falsehood that unless s. 940.04 is repealed, women would be imprisoned for having abortions. But in 1985 the legislature passed s. 940.13 which protects any woman who obtains an abortion from any penalty whatsoever.

"Wisconsin Right to Life and Wisconsin law itself consider women in these situations to be victims and not criminals," said Lyons. "It is unconscionable for pro-abortion organizations to continue to perpetuate the lie that women will go to prison, or be penalized in any way, if they obtain abortions under Wisconsin law."

AB 710

This legislation mirrors the language of the federal *Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act* of 2003 which was ruled constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court last year. Assembly Bill 710 is necessary in order to permit local officials to become involved in violations of the ban.

"By anyone's standards, this heinous procedure is barbaric and unbecoming a civilized society," said Susan Armacost, Wisconsin Right to Life Legislative Director. "The procedure takes three days to complete. Labor is induced and when the woman is fully

dilated, which can take three days or more, the abortionist uses instruments to turn the fully formed baby around so that the baby's legs will present first. The abortionist then grabs the baby's legs with forceps and pulls the baby out into the birth canal to the point where just her entire body is delivered, except for the head. The abortionist then jams scissors into the base of the baby's skull and opens the scissors to enlarge the hole. The scissors are removed, a suction catheter is inserted and the baby's brains are sucked out. The dead baby is removed."

Thus, in a partial birth abortion, a premature human is deliberately pulled to within just a few inches of being medically and legally a live birth. The difference between partial-birth abortion and homicide is a mere three inches!

Pro-abortion organizations are insisting that AB 710 be amended to include a "health" exception. The bill already contains a "life" of the mother exception. A "health" exception would render the legislation meaningless.

Expert testimony from both sides in the court cases challenging the federal *Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003* demonstrated that the procedure is not necessary for any maternal or fetal condition. In addition, the definition of "health" in the abortion context is found in the *Doe v. Bolton* companion decision to *Roe v. Wade*. In that decision, "health" is defined as "all factors – physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age – relevant to the well-being of the patient. All these factors may relate to health."

Armacost explained, "The term 'medically necessary to preserve the health of the woman' means any abortion an abortionist agrees to perform for any reason. Wisconsin Right to Life will consider a legislator's vote in favor of a 'health' exception to be a vote against the ban itself."

For information about Wisconsin Right to Life's position on these issues, visit WisconsinRightToLife.org

Wisconsin Right to Life

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