

Getting Government out of Abortion Business Goal of Pro-Life SB 714

An important pro-life bill, SB 714, was passed by big margins in the Senate and in the House in 2007, but when Governor Brad Henry vetoed the pro-life bill, efforts in the Senate to override the pro-abortion veto twice came up one vote short.

The bill's central provision was directed at getting our state government out of the abortion business by restricting the performance of abortions in state-owned facilities or by personnel employed by the state.

The U. S. Supreme Court's 1989 *Webster* decision upheld the right of states to decide, as a matter of public policy, to protect taxpayers from having to pay for facilities where abortions are performed or to pay the salaries of those performing them.

Abortion advocates claim a right of privacy provides a right to abortion. The state of Oklahoma has no obligation to provide public facilities or public employees for the exercise of a private "right."

Abortion is not medical care. Abortion is the intentional taking of an innocent human life. The state should not be a party to it, and taxpayers should not be forced to be complicit in it. To regard the killing of an unborn child as a legitimate part of mainstream medicine is a grave distortion. Neither society, nor doctors, are entitled to "draw lines," deciding which innocent human beings deserve to continue living and which, because of their "burdensomeness," their diminished "quality of life," or their estimated degree of "imperfection," should be killed.

And in the most tragic of cases, where medicine believes a child has a condition incompatible with life, where the child is "going to die anyway," what ethic could possibly justify the conclusion that the state, therefore, should kill the child?

Other elements of the bill include:

- 1) establishing an objective standard for a "medical-emergency", so that this exception to the informed-consent requirements of Oklahoma abortion law will not be subject to abuse;
- 2) requiring that, if an abortionist is unable to contact a minor's parent before a "medical-emergency" abortion, he must contact the parent afterwards;
- 3) prohibiting coverage for non-lifesaving abortions under health-insurance policies except through an optional rider for which an additional premium has been paid;
- 4) revising the statutory definition of abortion to include a new abortion method in which a drug is injected into the baby's heart to cause death *in utero*.

The bill's pro-abortion opponents believe doctors employed by the state – their salaries paid by you through your tax-dollars – should kill pre-born babies who have been diagnosed with a disability. "Search-and-destroy missions" is the term pro-life Surgeon-General C. Everett Koop, M.D., used to condemn these "quality-control" abortions 25 years ago. Eliminating disabilities by killing the disabled . . .

The foremost principle of medical ethics is "First, do no harm." The duty of the physician is to cure, to heal, not to function as society's tool to eliminate the unwanted or the imperfect.

Senate Bill 714 would get our state government out of the abortion business by prohibiting non-lifesaving abortions in state-owned facilities or by state employees.