

WOMAN'S PROTECTION ACT

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of this legislation is threefold:

1. To protect a woman who is being coerced into having an abortion;
2. To protect a woman from remote location abortions without being seen by a physician;
3. To require that a woman seeking an abortion see an ultrasound image of her unborn child.
4. To regulate abortion clinics.

WHY THIS BILL IS NECESSARY

Research collected after decades of legalized abortion reveals that, in many situations, choosing to abort is not what the woman really wants. The *Medical Science Monitor* reported in 2004 that according to a study of American post-abortive women, 64% of the women felt pressured by others to have an abortion. Pregnant women are intimidated into aborting through financial, relational or emotional threats.

Abortion providers are now offering RU 486 chemical abortions on women diagnosed as pregnant from remote locations without an in person physical exam. In May of 2006, the FDA acknowledged a total of 1070 adverse event reports related to use of RU 486. These events included 6 deaths, 9 life-threatening incidents, 232 hospitalizations, 116 blood transfusions, and 88 cases of infection. Since that time, there have been hundreds of additional adverse events as well as additional deaths reported in the United States. A European drug manufacturer has publicly stated that 29 women have died worldwide after using RU 486. Remote location abortions increase that risk.

Providing a woman seeking an abortion with an ultrasound image of her own unborn child enhances her knowledge before making a decision that is final in terms of ending the life of her child.

This legislation will protect women by acting as a deterrent to coerced abortion, requiring that dangerous abortion drugs be administered in person, and ensuring she has full knowledge of the status of her unborn child before making an abortion decision.

WISCONSIN'S WOMAN'S RIGHT TO KNOW LAW

In 1996 Wisconsin enacted the Woman's Right to Know (WRTK) law (s.253.10) to ensure that a woman who is considering an elective abortion receives relevant information regarding her pregnancy, her unborn child, the abortion procedure, and alternatives to abortion. The WRTK law details the specific information that must be given to the woman, except in the case of a medical emergency, followed by a 24 hour reflection period to allow the woman time to absorb and assimilate the information. The WRTK law specifically provides that an abortion may not be performed unless the woman upon whom the abortion is to be performed has given voluntary and informed consent under the requirements of this law.

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO

The Woman's Protection Act would add the following requirements to the current Woman's Right to Know law:

1. Any physician who is doing the informed consent counseling with a woman considering an abortion will be required to, in person, orally inform the woman that she has a right to refuse to consent to an abortion, that her consent is not voluntary if any person is using coercion to compel her to consent to have an abortion against her will, and that it is unlawful for the physician to perform an abortion upon her against her will. She will be provided with information on places to receive help if she is at risk of domestic abuse.
2. Administration of RU 486 or any drug or chemical used to induce an abortion on a woman diagnosed as pregnant would be required to be done in the same room and in the physical presence of the physician who prescribed, dispensed, or otherwise provided the drug or chemical to the patient. Every reasonable effort would have to be made to ensure the patient returns for a follow-up visit so that the physician can confirm the pregnancy has been terminated and to assess the patient's medical condition.
3. Prior to obtaining informed consent before an abortion, the physician would be required to perform an ultrasound on the pregnant woman, provide her with a verbal explanation of the ultrasound image, display the ultrasound images to the pregnant woman, and provide a medical description of the ultrasound images. Oklahoma has enacted a law that requires viewing an ultrasound prior to the performance of an abortion.
4. Abortion clinics would have to be licensed under the same state guidelines followed by other medical clinics.

Wisconsin Right to Life strongly supports the Woman's Protection Act authored by Senator Mary Lazich and Rep. Michelle Litjens.

