

**New Abortion Law Blocked
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"I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him." (Deuteronomy 30:19b-20)

This year, the pro-life groups in Missouri worked with bipartisan legislators to pass good legislation aimed at reducing the number of abortions through new restrictions.

In 2004, the number of abortions in Missouri declined 3.8 percent, from 12,476 to 12,000 according to Missouri Department of Health Statistics released in August 2005. Pro-life education efforts and legislative activity is beginning to make a difference. Pro-lifers continue to work diligently to gain even more protection for innocent unborn babies and health/safety benefits for teens and women.

On September 6 the Missouri General Assembly went into a special session to produce this legislation. A Majority of pro-life Republicans controlling both the state house of representatives and the senate, combined with the support of several pro-life Democrats, enabled the passage of pro-life legislation during the special session. Governor Blunt encouraged lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to pass a bill in defense of the unborn that he was ready willing and able to sign.

The Missouri State Senate passed SB1, sponsored by Senator John Loudon on September 8, 2005. This pro-life bill requires abortionists to have clinical privileges at a hospital within 30 miles of where abortions are performed. Interestingly, longtime abortion practitioner Felicia Stewart, MD, warns women in her book Understanding Your Body: Every Woman's Guide to a Lifetime of Health, "It is crucial that the clinic or physician you choose be able to provide immediate access to a hospital, because true medical emergencies do occur with abortion in rare cases. Geographical proximity to a hospital is important, but it is even more important that the physician performing your abortion have staff privileges at the hospital."

The bill also defines who can qualify as a "next friend" when a minor seeks a court exemption from Missouri's parental consent requirement, and allows a civil suit to be brought against anyone who intentionally causes, aids, or assists a minor to obtain an abortion without the required informed consent. It defines "next friend" for purposes of consent to abortion by a minor to exclude any person who has a financial interest in or may potentially gain from the minor's decision to have an abortion. Under the law, if a pregnant teen seeks a court order to get an abortion without parental consent, no one at the abortion clinic who has a financial or ideological interest in her getting an abortion could be her "next friend" in court. Likewise, the adult male, who'd be obliged to pay child support or who might be charged with statutory rape when her pregnancy becomes known, could not be her "next friend."

This newly passed law will require Illinois abortion providers to honor parental consent laws of Missouri. Only Illinois, among Midwestern states, has no parental notification or consent laws in force. It has been estimated that 400 or more Missouri teens obtain abortions in Illinois annually, many specifically so they won't have to tell their parents.

The Missouri House of Representatives passed SB1, on September 14, 2005, and Governor Blunt signed the legislation the next day, on September 15, 2005.

Governor Matt Blunt issued the following statement after signing this pro-life legislation:
"I am grateful to the Missouri General Assembly for passing a good pro-life piece of

legislation that will reduce the number of abortions in our state. This is a solid step in the right direction toward cultivating a culture that values human life and the rights of the unborn."

CWA of Missouri applauds the Missouri General Assembly and Governor Blunt for this legislation to protect women and minors.

That's the good news. The bad news is that abortion businesses, knowing their only hope for imposing their abortion agenda on the people of Missouri is to use the courts, immediately filed suit in Kansas City Circuit Court and Jefferson City Federal Court.

Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri, and Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region along with three other corporations that provide abortions or abortion guidance in Missouri asked for an injunction to prevent enforcement of the new law. The suits say that the new law is unconstitutionally vague and that barring information to teens is unconstitutional.

Speaking in support of SB1, Haven Howard, CWA of MO Area Director stated, "This bill will provide safeguards for the health of women and minors who seek abortions. It tightens legal requirements for both doctors who perform abortions and those persons who come between parent and minor child by giving aid and counsel without parental consent."

The lawsuit will be defended by the state attorney general, Jay Nixon. In a statement, Governor Blunt said, "We are prepared to give the attorney general all of the assistance he needs to do his job, which is to defend laws passed by the legislature and enacted by the governor."