



FREEDOM OF CHOICE: CHOICE FOR WHOM?

Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) would take away choice for medical personnel and parents

"[i]t is the policy of the United States that every woman has the fundamental right to choose to bear a child, to terminate a pregnancy prior to fetal viability, or to terminate a pregnancy after fetal viability when necessary to protect the life or health of the woman."

These provisions included in FOCA would result in a codification of the principles enunciated in *Roe v. Wade*. However, FOCA goes much farther; most feel that it would invalidate any "statute, ordinance, regulation, administrative order, decision, policy, practice, or other action" of any federal, state, or local government or governmental official (or any person acting under government authority) that would "deny or interfere with a woman's right to choose" abortion, or that would "discriminate against the exercise of the right...in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information." [Americans United for Life; Denise M. Burke: "The Freedom of Choice Act: Endangering Women and Silencing the Voices of Everyday Americans"]

The practical effect of FOCA would be to nullify:

- Informed consent laws (In Kansas the Women's Right to Know Act)
- Waiting periods
- Parental consent and notification laws
- Health and safety regulations for abortion facilities
- Requirements that abortionists be licensed physicians
- Bans on partial-birth abortion
- Bans on abortion after viability. FOCA would permit a viable baby to be aborted if the woman's "health" were threatened. The "health" loop-hole is exclusively used by George Tiller and could include a single episode of depression or wanting to be able to go to rock concerts as found by eminent psychiatrist Dr. Paul McHugh, Johns Hopkins.
- Limits on public funding for elective abortions...American taxpayers would be required to pay for a procedure they may find morally objectionable.
- Limits on the use of public facilities...in other words all publically-owned hospitals and medical schools would have to perform abortions/and/or teach physicians how to perform abortions.
- Legal conscience protections for doctors, pharmacists and health-workers that decline to participate in abortions.
- Legal protections for Catholic and other religiously-affiliated hospitals who refuse to allow abortions within their facilities.

Not satisfied with *Roe*

Thirty-five years after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, those who espouse abortion are not satisfied; they will not rest until their "choice" is inflicted on all Americans. In spite of the fact that abortion is becoming less acceptable to the American public, they want to make sure that what they believe to be a fundamental "right" is without any restrictions or protections for women who seek an abortion.

History of FOCA

FOCA was originally introduced in the late 1980's by pro-abortion legislators who feared *Roe v. Wade* would be overturned. In 1993 they were hopeful that it would pass when Bill Clinton became President; however, the Republican Congress squelched their hopes. In 2004 Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-California) introduced the legislation again, stating that laws restricting abortion that mandate that women be fully informed about the procedure, the risks and the alternatives; parental consent for minors and the limitations on public funding be invalidated.

The same people who say they represent women and that they want abortion to be "safe and rare" are literally hoping to guarantee that abortionists and the abortion industry are given *carte blanche* in how they operate their clinics. It is tantamount to offering an already lucrative industry a blank check from the taxpayer who may abhor the procedure. It is putting minor girls at risk of being exploited by a predator that needs abortion to cover up his crime. Rather than making abortion rare, adopting FOCA would make protection for women and girls non-existent, much to the delight of the abortion industry who will exploit women and teens to the sound of the "ka ching" of the cash register.

What are the candidates' positions?

The Presidential candidates have differing opinions about FOCA. Sen. Obama has supported the act and in a fund-raising dinner for Planned Parenthood, has promised FOCA will be his first priority if elected. Sen. McCain supports restrictions on abortion.

The result of FOCA legislation in the states

Those states (California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Nevada and Washington) who have allowed FOCA-type legislation show a marked increase in abortions performed in contrast to the rest of the U.S. which shows a dramatic decrease. Those states whose citizens want common-sense protection for women would have their voices silenced under FOCA if it is passed.