

CONCERNED WOMEN *for* AMERICA OF NORTH DAKOTA

Letter to the editor

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What we know about fetal development

The *Dobb's v Jackson Women's Health Organization* case before the Supreme Court challenges a Mississippi law that restricts abortions after 15 weeks. The question is whether all pre-viability prohibitions on elective abortions are unconstitutional.

This case is an opportunity for the Court to catch up to the 21st Century. Scientific advances in fetal imaging have brought light into the womb. A [15-week-old](#) baby has eyes and eyelids with a well-formed face, hands, and feet with toes and fingers. The baby is already making red blood cells and other organs are fast developing. Muscle and bones grow and become harder making it possible for the child to move. We've all seen the images of the child making a fist or sucking their thumb.

They feel pain. From 15 weeks onward, “the fetus is extremely sensitive to painful stimuli, and that this fact should be taken into account when performing invasive medical procedures on the fetus. It is necessary to apply adequate analgesia to prevent the suffering of the fetus.”¹ To refuse prohibitions on elective abortions is unethical and barbaric.

These are all logical reasons Americans overwhelmingly [support](#) a ban on late-term abortion and restricting it during the first trimester. A recent [Marist poll](#) found 75% of Americans, including 61% of those who identify as pro-choice, say abortion should be banned at the very least after the first trimester. Americans value life. Time for the Supreme Court to catch up.

¹ Charlotte Lozier Institute, Fact Sheet: Science of Fetal Pain, available at <https://lozierinstitute.org/fact-sheet-science-of-fetal-pain/>.