



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on August 11, 2013

Arizona Health Dept. Numbers Show Hopeful Drop in Abortions

The [2012 Abortion Report](#) from the Arizona Department of Health Services shows that the state recorded a 7.4 percent reduction in abortion procedures in 2012 from the previous year. According to the state health department's statistics, Arizona's legal abortion clinics reported a total of 13,340 "elective" abortions in 2012, compared to 14,401 in 2011.



While pro-life leaders consider the reduction reason for optimism, the state's previous report showed an even greater drop in abortions of eight percent from August 2011 to July 2012 (13,538 abortions) compared to August 2010 to July 2011 (14,711).

Arizona has been one of the acknowledged leaders in legislation designed to curb abortion. Early in 2012 the state legislature passed a measure banning abortions after the 20th week of pregnancy. The bill, called the "Mother's Health and Safety Act," is predicated on the safety risks that abortion poses to pregnant women, along with the pain inflicted on the pre-born babies killed by the murderous procedure.

Additionally, the bill, which was signed into law by Arizona's pro-life governor, Jan Brewer, requires that mothers considering abortion have an ultrasound at least 24 hours prior to an abortion; requires abortion doctors to have admitting privileges at a hospital within 30 miles of their abortion clinic; and provides for an ["informed consent" website](#) to offer pregnant women accurate information about the development of their babies in the womb, the risks they face with abortion, and available alternatives.

The pro-life [Center for Arizona Policy](#) responded to the new statistics, pointing to Arizona's leadership "in the effort to protect the health and safety of women and pre-born children." The group said that the news is encouraging "to everyone who values life. It is also a testament to what the thriving pro-life movement in Arizona has been able to accomplish."

Attorney Steven Aden of the group [Alliance Defending Freedom](#), which has helped defend Arizona's pro-life measures against legal challenges by Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers, said that "every innocent life deserves to be protected, and Arizona lawmakers should be commended for implementing laws that save innocent lives."

But Arizona's Health Director Will Humble pointed out that in addition to the efforts of pro-life activists in the state, there were probably other factors at work in lowering the abortion numbers. He noted, for example, that the teen pregnancy rate in Arizona has dropped about 35 percent over the past six years, a statistic that would certainly impact the abortion numbers.

Of great concern to pro-life leaders is one particular reason for the drop in pregnancies: the increased usage of the Plan B oral contraceptive — known euphemistically as the "abortion pill" because of



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evidence that it can cause abortion in women who take the pill very early in a pregnancy.

Because such abortifacient drugs are now available over the counter — including to teens — the incidence of abortion in such cases will never be counted by the state. Humble said that “one of the impacts that you’ll see” because of the use of Plan B type drugs “is fewer abortions being tracked in our surveillance report because, A, there was never a counted pregnancy to begin with because there was never a diagnosis of pregnancy, and, B, obviously, they’re not getting counted as an abortion.”

Because of this and other factors, the Center for Arizona Policy added in its statement that “it is clear the efforts to safeguard women and pre-born children from the dangerous and deadly practices of the abortion industry are far from over.”

In addition to the elevation of the “abortion pill” as a common contraceptive, the group said that “revelations of the atrocities in Dr. Kermit Gosnell’s abortion clinic, along with the recent Live Action undercover video at the late-term Phoenix abortion clinic Family Planning Associates prove that we still have a long way to go to ensure that every life is protected and respected.”



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