



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on October 14, 2011

## Ariz. Abortions Drop 30 Percent After Pro-Life Law

Arizona is demonstrating the positive impact of pro-life laws as the state health department recently released statistics showing that the number of abortions has dropped in the state by some 30 percent. The Associated Press reported that, according to the latest figures, a total of 729 abortions were performed in September, “down nearly 31 percent from September 2010, down nearly 32 percent from August 2011 and down 39 percent from the previous 12-month average of just over 1,200.”



The dramatic drop is due largely to implementation of the state’s Abortion Consent Act. While the law was passed in 2009 and signed by pro-life Governor Jan Brewer (above left), it remained in limbo for two years as Planned Parenthood sued to have it overturned. The law finally went into effect in August of this year after the Arizona Court of Appeals ruled 3-0 in favor of its constitutionality.

Among the law’s requirements are that minors provide a notarized parental signature of approval before receiving an abortion; that women be provided with full and accurate information about abortion by a doctor in person at least 24 hours before the procedure; that only a physician can perform an abortion; and that no medical professional can be forced to perform an abortion against his or her religious or moral convictions.

Focus on the Family’s [CitizenLink.com](#) noted that news of the lowered numbers surprised even Cathi Herrod, executive director of the [Center for Arizona Policy](#) (CAP), the state’s pro-family group that lobbied extensively for passage of the Abortion Consent Act. “I don’t know that I ever expected abortion numbers to drop, so I kind of feel like, ‘O ye of little faith,’” she told CitizenLink. “We’re very encouraged by seeing a quick impact of the law having an effect since the court ruling.”

According to the AP, Planned Parenthood Arizona CEO Bryan Howard argued that his group’s clinics were most impacted by requirements that doctors perform all medical abortions. Previously, the state allowed physicians assistants and nurse practitioners to perform the procedure. Since August Planned Parenthood has stopped offering abortions at seven of its 10 locations around the state, mainly due to a lack of doctors willing to facilitate the deadly procedure. Howard “denied that the informed consent provisions had any impact,” reported the AP, “saying his organization had seen no drop-off in women following through with appointments for abortions. ‘The bottom line is we’ve lost the capacity to provide the care,’ he said. ‘This is not about the need going away.’”

Nonetheless, Herrod told pro-life Arizonans, the initial lowered abortion numbers “are the fruits of your



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partnership with Gov. Brewer, state legislators, and CAP to make a difference to empower women and give them the opportunity to make an informed choice.”

She emphasized that the newly implemented laws “now ensure that all women considering an abortion are given an ultrasound exam and are provided the opportunity to see those results and to hear the baby’s heartbeat. Now, non-doctors are not allowed to perform surgical abortions, and doctors must be involved in the care of all women seeking abortion.”

Herrod said that the state’s pro-life groups need to make sure that follow-up alternatives to abortion are in place. “We’ll be watching the numbers closely to see what happens,” she said. “We won’t know the full impact until we see the live births increase. This shows the critical need for pregnancy care centers. As abortion drops, it’s a tremendous opportunity for pregnancy centers to step into the breach and really help these women in the community.”

Herrod warned that the fight for Arizona’s unborn “is far from over,” adding that “I anticipate further lawsuits from the abortion industry. For now, our CAP Policy Team is assessing what else can be done to protect women and pre-born children. And, I hope you rejoice with us that lives are being saved.”



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