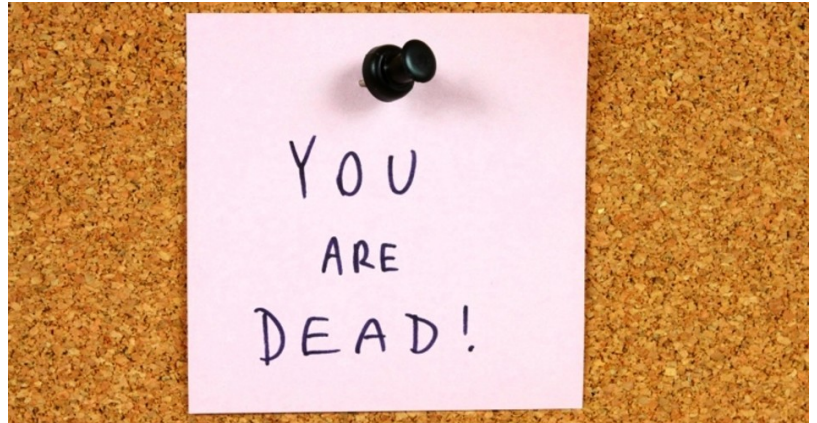




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 29, 2013

North Dakota Governor Signs Pro-Life Bills, Receives Death Threats

In a strange twist on abortion activism, North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple reportedly received death threats after signing legislation March 22 that bans abortion when a heartbeat can be detected — at about six weeks of pregnancy — along with laws that prohibit sex-selective abortions and abortions that target children with genetic anomalies such as Down syndrome. [LifeSiteNews.com](#) reported that the administrator of the pro-abortion [Stand Up For Women ND](#) Facebook page was forced to post a message urging pro-abortion activists not to become violent against the governor for signing the pro-life measures into law.



“We have received word that Governor Dalrymple is receiving death threats,” the Facebook page’s owner wrote. “Please, friends, do not make these inappropriate threats against ANYONE, and please urge your friends to do the same.” The urgent message added: “PLEASE NO CRIMINAL THREATS! NO VIOLENCE! We want stoic, respectful solidarity or we will not be taken seriously.” (Emphases in original.)

A few abortion supporters were skeptical that the threats were legitimate, going as far as accusing pro-life activists of instigating the violent rhetoric in order to cast aspersions on “pro-choice” efforts. “I doubt people are sending death threats,” offered one individual. “Until you have a credible source, I wouldn’t use these fear tactics.” But the owner of the Stand Up for Women ND Facebook page confirmed that the threat “was credible, and remains so. It is currently being investigated. They have traced the threats to somewhere in Richland County.”

According to LifeSite, Gov. Dalrymple’s spokesman, Jeff Zent, told a local news site that the governor had received more than 3,000 calls and e-mails about the bills — some of them highly emotional in nature. “Some of the calls have been a little extreme in the messages, but for the most part people want to let the governor know their feelings,” Zent said. A member of the governor’s staff told LifeSite that there were plenty of comments in favor of the bills, with feedback to the governor running about even for both sides.

As previously reported in [The New American](#), the pro-life measures, passed in mid-March by the North Dakota legislature, are the most restrictive abortion laws in the country. Proponents have said that the purpose of the laws, particularly the six-week abortion ban — known as the “Heartbeat bill” — is to prompt a challenge of the Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling that effectively legalized abortion throughout the United States. The North Dakota Family Alliance Action said in a statement: “We all know the significance of a beating heart. We may have witnessed the loss of a loved one being cared for in a hospital, one moment hearing the presence of the heartbeat via the heart monitoring machine, the



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next moment experiencing the deafening silence of a heart beating no more. The heartbeat offers an undeniable truth about life.... Just as we protect life, a living being, until that heart stops beating, no matter the age, we must afford that same protection when that heartbeat becomes detectable in the unborn.”

Pro-abortion groups have promised to challenge the six-week ban, and believe they have federal courts on their side. “The passage of this law is nothing short of a frontal assault on the U.S. Constitution, 40 years of Supreme Court precedent, and the health and fundamental rights of women,” said Nancy Northrup of the pro-abortion Center for Reproductive Rights. Similarly, Planned Parenthood CEO Cecile Richards declared that laws such as North Dakota’s, as well as an earlier [12-week abortion ban passed in Arkansas](#), “are outrageous and unconstitutional and they will not stand.” She insisted that the “state-by-state race to the bottom on women’s health is not what Americans elected their lawmakers to focus on. A majority of Americans consistently believe that abortion should remain safe and legal in this country.”

Even some mainstream pro-life groups have been critical of the North Dakota and Arkansas abortion bans, warning that in the present judicial climate they are likely to be overturned, giving pro-abortion forces an easy victory in the long-range fight to overturn the *Roe v. Wade* ruling. Additionally, state officials in North Dakota warned that a court challenge to the six-week ban would represent a considerable expense to the state for a legal fight it is unlikely to win.

But North Dakota State Representative Bette Grande, one of the sponsors of the Heartbeat bill, said that concerns over a legal challenge shouldn’t stop the state from doing everything it its power to protect the unborn at every phase of development. “Whether this is challenged in court is entirely up to the abortion industry,” Grande told lawmakers prior to passage of the Heartbeat bill. “Given the lucrative nature of abortion, it is likely that any statute that reduces the number of customers will be challenged by the industry.”



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