



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on November 6, 2014

Pro-life Amendment Passes in Tennessee

Despite a full-court blitz by abortion giant Planned Parenthood in the lead-up to the November 4 ballot, voters in Tennessee passed a pro-life initiative that will make it easier to protect the unborn in the Volunteer State.

By a 54- to 46-percent margin, Tennessee voters approved state constitutional Amendment 1 that the *Chattanooga Times-Free Press* reported will empower state lawmakers “to pass more regulations on abortions — an ability that was deterred by a 2000 Tennessee Supreme Court ruling that said the state constitution was more protective of a woman’s right to an abortion than the U.S. Constitution.”



While the state had some regulations on abortion, such as parental consent laws and the requirement for abortionists to have admitting privileges at local hospitals, with passage of the Amendment 1 Tennessee could follow such states as Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi to pass laws that would severely hamper abortion providers. Among the measures that are being discussed are surgical requirements for abortion facilities, waiting periods for women seeking an abortion, and mandatory ultrasounds for mothers before the procedure.

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The amendment states: “Nothing in this Constitution secures or protects a right to abortion or requires the funding of an abortion. The people retain the right through their elected state representatives and state senators to enact, amend, or repeal statutes regarding abortion, including, but not limited to circumstances of pregnancy resulting from rape or incest or when necessary to save the life of the mother.”

In the weeks leading up to the election, Planned Parenthood spent \$1.3 million in an effort to persuade voters to reject the amendment. Seattle’s Planned Parenthood franchise reportedly ponied up \$750,000 to help defeat the Tennessee measure, according to the *Tennessean* newspaper, while three Planned Parenthood chapters in California joined to contribute \$500,000 against the measure, and a pair of Florida chapters contributed \$101,000, the newspaper reported.

“Amendment 1 is of interest to Planned Parenthood because abortion is big business,” Russell D. Moore of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, based in Nashville, told [Baptist Press News](#) days before the vote. “They want an unregulated Wild West of abortion in Tennessee so they can shore up their bottom line.”

Predictably, state Planned Parenthood officials predicted dire consequences for women with the passage of the amendment, with Ashley Coffield, president of Planned Parenthood-Greater Memphis Region, calling it a “dangerous ballot measure that strips away the state’s established right to safe and



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legal abortion.” Coffield vowed that Planned Parenthood “will not stand for restrictions that serve only to create barriers to service.”

Pro-life leaders applauded passage of the amendment for which they had lobbied tirelessly. Brian Harris of [Tennessee Right to Life](#) said that “for those of us who believe life is sacred, this was the necessary first step toward protection not only for the unborn but for women and girls who fall prey to people looking to profit from untimely or unexpected pregnancies.”

Harris told [LifeNews.com](#) before the vote that the state supreme court’s 2000 pro-abortion ruling made it so that “common sense protections were immediately stripped from state law books including informed consent for women considering abortion, a 48 hour waiting period, and a requirement that second and third trimester abortions be performed in regulated hospitals rather than out-patient abortion facilities.”

Following the amendment’s passage he said that “we are grateful to God and to the good people of Tennessee for this victory. Despite millions of abortion dollars flooding our airwaves with deceptive ads, the people of Tennessee saw through the falsehoods and made their voices heard.”

Similarly, David Fowler of the [Family Action Council of Tennessee](#) said he was proud “of the people of Tennessee who rejected the deceptive media messages against Amendment 1 paid for by millions of dollars from abortion providers both inside and outside of our state. The passage of Amendment 1 shows that thousands of citizens coming together on something about which they are passionate can accomplish something that money alone can’t buy.”

Both pro-life leaders said that grassroots activism was key to the amendment’s passage. “We recognized that we would never have the financial resources of the abortion industry so we began planning long ago to build a team of advocates who could educate and organize their local communities,” Harris told LifeNews. “That effort paid off, especially in rural regions of the state where volunteers raised funds and awareness of both the amendment and the 2000 court ruling.”

Fowler said that “education was the key” to the amendment’s victory. “Planned Parenthood literally spent millions of dollars in advertising that distorted what the amendment did and what the law was in Tennessee. So many pastors began to speak about it from their pulpits and talk about it, and distribute information to their members, and it really made the difference.”



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