



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 18, 2019

Texas Governor Signs Bill to Protect Babies Born Alive During Abortions

On Friday, Texas became the latest state to provide protections to infants who survive abortions, the *Texas Tribune* reports.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed into law House Bill 16, which requires abortion practitioners to provide basic medical care to infants who survive abortions. Individuals who violate the law face third-degree felony charges and a fine up to \$100,000. The bill also mandates any individual who has knowledge of a failure to comply with the law to report it to the attorney general.



“The physician must exercise the same degree of professional skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the child as a reasonably diligent and conscientious physician would render to any other child born alive at the same gestational age,” the bill reads. “‘Professional skill, care, and diligence’ includes a requirement that the physician who performed or attempted the abortion ensure that the child born alive be immediately transferred to a hospital.”

The bill passed the state House in April by a vote of 93-1 with 50 abstentions, and passed the Senate in May by a bipartisan vote of 21-10 with Democratic state senators Eddie Lucio and Judith Zaffirini breaking from their party to support the measure.

“We’re drawing a line in the sand,” said the bill’s sponsor, Republican State Representative Jeff Leach. “We’re proclaiming clearly and loudly together that a baby who survives an abortion deserves the full protection of the law and the highest standard of medical care.”

House Bill 16 faced predictable opposition from pro-abortion advocates, who claimed the bill is a waste of time. “To debate this bill ... would legitimize its false information,” argued state Representative Donna Howard on the House floor. “We refuse to waste limited time we have here by entertaining malicious and purely political attacks against women and doctors.”

Dyana Limon-Mercado of Planned Parenthood Texas Votes made similar claims. “HB 16 is a blatantly false, inflammatory and dangerous bill being pushed by anti-choice organizations to further stigmatize abortion, intimidate physicians and, once again, interfere with a woman’s right to seek medical care,” said Limon-Mercado.

National and international government data, as well as personal testimonies, undermine these claims, however. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 140 infant deaths nationwide involved induced terminations from 2003 to 2014.

In 2018, the Canadian Institute of Health Information reported 766 late-term, live-birth abortions over a five-year period. In Western Australia, at least 27 babies survived abortions between 1999 and 2016, according to the state’s health minister.



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Live Action has documented on camera how abortionists in late-term abortion facilities talk about abortion survivors. Several have admitted to flushing babies born alive down toilets or placing them in bags to suffocate them. Others simply leave the babies alone to die.

During debate on North Carolina's House floor over similar legislation, Republican state Representative Pat McElraft recalled her own experiences of seeing newborns who survived abortions being left to die in the hospital, where she worked as a phlebotomist.

"I was on a break and went in to visit with the pathologist in the pathology lab and I asked him, I said, 'What are all these little pigs doing in these buckets?' He told me, 'Pat, look again,' and I did. They were perfectly formed little human babies in those buckets," she said.

McElraft also reported that she knew of a doctor at the hospital who drowned newborns who survived abortions, North Carolina Health News reported.

Some of the most vocal pro-life activists are abortion survivors who have given their own [personal testimonies](#) in government hearings.

In other words, assertions that born-alive legislation is unnecessary and somehow places an undue burden on women seeking abortion are patently untrue.

A number of states have made born-alive legislation such as Texas House Bill 16 a priority this year. According to Life News, Kentucky, Montana, North Carolina, and Wisconsin lawmakers advanced legislation that would protect infants born alive during botched abortions from infanticide, but the bills were vetoed by Democratic governors in Montana and North Carolina. Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers has also threatened to veto the bill.

A similar bill has been rejected multiple times in the U.S. Senate.

The Texas Values Action took to Twitter last week to celebrate Governor Abbott's signing of the bill. "Children who survive an abortion should be, and now will be, protected and given lifesaving care in Texas," the group tweeted.

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