



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 17, 2023

Iowa Governor Signs Heartbeat Bill Into Law

For the second time in five years, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds [signed a “heartbeat” bill into law](#). After calling the state’s General Assembly back into special session to consider the issue, the legislative branch passed the bill overwhelmingly last week and Reynolds signed it into law on Friday.

She celebrated:

This week, in a rare and historic special session, the Iowa Legislature voted for a second time to reject the inhumanity of abortion and pass the fetal heartbeat bill.



AP Images
Kim Reynolds

The bill is nearly identical to the one passed and signed into law back in 2018, but pro-abortion groups were able to obtain a ruling declaring it unconstitutional. The case went to the state’s highest court which, because one of the justices recused himself due to a conflict of interest, deadlocked on June 16. That’s when Governor Reynolds moved to call a special session to resurrect the 2018 law that had languished for five years.

Reynolds recalled:

In May of 2018, I proudly signed the fetal heartbeat bill into law. Days later, it was challenged by abortion providers who do little to help women in crisis understand their choices and grossly misrepresent the service they provide as health care.

For the last five years, our battle ground has been in the courts...

Then, just a few weeks ago on June 16, the Iowa Supreme Court, by a 3-3 tie, failed to exercise its authority to dissolve the lower court’s injunction of Iowa’s fetal heartbeat law....

Iowa previously had a 20-week abortion law, and with passage on Friday the state’s new law prohibits abortions to around six weeks, when a fetal heartbeat can usually be detected.

It may not last.

Two days before the signing, Planned Parenthood [filed a lawsuit](#) against the new law in a county court:

Because the Act takes effect so early in pregnancy, it will ban the vast majority of abortions in Iowa. The Act bans abortions at a stage at which many people do not yet know they are pregnant, and even those who do know may not have had time to make a decision about whether to have an abortion, research their options, and schedule appointments at a health center, not to mention overcoming the logistical and financial obstacles required to travel to a health center for an abortion.

By banning the vast majority of abortions in Iowa, the Act unlawfully violates the rights of



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Petitioners, their medical providers and other staff, and their patients under the Iowa Constitution and would severely jeopardize their health, safety, and welfare.

To safeguard themselves, their medical providers and other staff, and their patients from this unconstitutional law, Petitioners seek a temporary injunction to take effect upon the Act's enactment by the Governor, followed by declaratory and permanent injunctive relief, to prevent the State from enforcing the Act.

Polk County Court Judge Joseph Seidlin said he would take the weekend to consider the issue, and would issue his ruling on Planned Parenthood's complaint no later than Tuesday this week.

He is expected to rule against Reynolds, setting the stage for an appeal to the state's high court, where the issue will be decided once and for all.

The momentum is all behind such restrictions on abortion. At present, 16 states have laws protecting the unborn from conception through six weeks. According to Planned Parenthood, 27 states have some abortion restrictions.

And polls are showing Americans favor such limitations by a significant majority.



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