



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on August 3, 2022

Lessons From Pro-life Defeat in Kansas

On Tuesday night, voters in Kansas soundly — by double digits — rejected an effort that would have affirmed “there is no Kansas constitutional right to abortion or to require the government funding of abortion.”

Kansas legislators, strongly Republican and strongly pro-life, had placed the initiative, Amendment 2, on the ballot in an attempt to counteract a 2019 decision by the Kansas Supreme Court declaring that the state’s constitution “enables a woman to make decisions regarding her body, health, family formation, and family life, including the decision whether to continue a pregnancy.”



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It was certainly a huge defeat for the lives of unborn babies in the Sunflower State, and will no doubt be touted by the progressive media as an example of how the American people favor the unrestricted right to abortion. Emily Wales of Great Plains Planned Parenthood was ecstatic, issuing a [statement](#), “This historic victory was the result of a groundswell of grassroots support and a broad coalition of reasonable, thoughtful Kansans across the state who put health care over politics.” She added, “Now, more than ever, our work continues.”

[President Joe Biden](#) also hailed the decision. “This vote makes clear what we know: the majority of Americans agree that women should have access to abortion and should have the right to make their own health care decisions.” Biden urged Congress to “listen to the will of the American people and restore the protections of *Roe* as federal law,” arguing that was “the only way to secure a woman’s right to choose.”

The Democratic governor of Kansas, Laura Kelley, had opposed the proposed amendment, saying it would “throw the state back into the Dark Ages.” Her Republican challenger, Derek Schmidt, the state’s attorney general, on the other hand, was a strong supporter of the proposal, telling Catholic TV network EWTN, “There’s still room for progress” in decreasing abortions in Kansas.

In 2019, the Kansas Legislature had enacted a law that would have banned second-trimester abortions, and another law which imposed certain health regulations on the grisly practice. The Kansas Supreme Court, however, in a 6-1 vote, held that those restrictions violated the Kansas Constitution. Because of that ruling, most abortions in Kansas are not banned until the 22nd week of pregnancy.

Polling had indicated a close outcome of Tuesday’s vote, with the “yes” side — the side which would have overturned the 2019 decision — actually winning 47-43.

This is one of the many lessons of the outcome of this election — we do not and we should not make public policy via polls. It is not clear as to why the polls would have been so far wrong in this instance, but it is quite possible that the pro-abortion side was more energized than the pro-life side. After all, the average person, on both sides of the question, probably thinks that the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed abortion nationwide, although all their ruling did was return the matter to the states — where it



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belonged.

Some lesser-informed pro-lifers could very well not have seen the vote as all that important, having bought into the narrative that the Supreme Court had decided the issue. This vote in Kansas, a rural state with no large cities, indicates that the pro-life movement still has much work to do.

There could also have been some confusion as to whether the yes vote or the no vote was in opposition to abortion (those who oppose abortion may have thought a no vote indicated opposition, while a yes vote was for abortion rights). There is no doubt that the millions of dollars spent in Kansas in a massive disinformation campaign — claiming things like the Kansas Legislature was poised to ban contraception and the like — made a difference with many Kansans who naively believed such propaganda.

Kansas Right to Life [issued a statement](#) addressing this very issue:

Over the last six months, Kansans endured an onslaught of misinformation from radical left organizations that spent millions of out-of-state dollars to spread lies about the Value Them Both Amendment. Sadly, the mainstream media propelled the left's false narrative, contributing to the confusion that misled Kansans about the amendment. While the outcome is not what we hoped, our movement and campaign have proven our resolve and commitment. We will not abandon women and babies.

The Value Them Both Coalition wants to thank our amazing, faithful grassroots supporters across the great state of Kansas. Your strength, goodwill, and tireless efforts should give everyone in the Sunflower State hope for the future.

This outcome is a temporary setback, and our dedicated fight to value women and babies is far from over. As our state becomes an abortion destination, it will be even more important for Kansans to support our pregnancy resource centers, post-abortive ministries, and other organizations that provide supportive care to women facing unexpected pregnancies. We will be back.

This should also provide a powerful lesson for those who naively think we should have a constitutional convention. Delegates to that convention would be deluged with untold millions of dollars of direct propaganda, along with pressure from powerful special interests, to produce a drastically altered U.S. Constitution — or even an entirely new document. State legislatures (or state conventions) would be subject to the same types of pressures.

It is likely a constitutional amendment to legalize abortion throughout the entire course of pregnancy would be passed at any such a convention. Other rights protected by our present Constitution, including religious liberty, free speech, and the right to keep and bear arms, could be expected to be greatly curtailed — all in the name of the good of society.



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