



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 3, 2021

Lubbock, Texas, Votes to Ban All Abortions; Proclaims Itself a “Sanctuary City for the Unborn”

On Friday, the city of Lubbock, Texas, voted to ban all abortions in its city limits and also declared itself a “Sanctuary City for the Unborn.” The vote was not close, with the new ordinance passing with 62.5 percent voting for the ban to only 37.5 percent voting against it.

With the vote, Lubbock, a city of approximately 260,000 in northwest Texas, became the largest city in the United States to codify such a ban. Some 22 Texas locations have also enacted “Sanctuary City for the Unborn” policies as well as two locations in Nebraska.



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But none of those small cities even had an abortion provider in town. Lubbock has a Planned Parenthood in town, which only began offering abortion services on April 15 of this year. Those services will certainly be affected by the legislation, likely setting up lawsuits challenging the city’s new ordinance.

“The Church of Jesus Christ banded together, stepped up to their role, their God-given role, and said we’re not going to let babies be killed in our city,” said Jim Baxa of West Texas for Life on Saturday after the results were announced. “All these churches banded together. There were 200 churches in the City of Lubbock, working together to stand up for life. It’s excellent.”

Violating the new abortion ban in Lubbock will cost perpetrators a \$2,000 fine per violation. In addition, the law allows for individuals affected by abortions — which could include the mother, father, grandparents, and siblings of the unborn child — to sue individuals and entities that provide abortions for damages, including emotional distress.

But the enemies of life will not go away quietly and just allow this new law to be enforced. Planned Parenthood issued a statement vowing to remain open in the city: “Planned Parenthood is a trusted resource for anyone in Lubbock and the surrounding communities for essential healthcare services,” said Sarah Wheat, chief external affairs officer for Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas. “We want Lubbock residents to know: Our doors are open and we will continue to advocate for our patients, no matter what.”

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) fired its own shot across Lubbock’s bow before the final results of the vote were even announced.

“Abortion is not just essential healthcare, but also a fundamental right protected by the United States Constitution,” said Drucilla Tigner, policy and advocacy strategist at the ACLU of Texas. “The ACLU has a long history of challenging unconstitutional abortion bans and will continue to fight to protect the fundamental rights of the people of Lubbock.”



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Last year, the ACLU challenged a similar ban on abortions in the Texas communities of Waskom, Naples, Joaquim, Tenaha, Rusk, Gary, and Wells on behalf of pro-abortion groups Lilith Fund and Texas Equal Access or TEA Fund. In the ordinances, both the Liltith and TEA Funds were referred to as “criminal entities.” The ACLU dropped the challenge in May of 2020 after the communities agreed to remove the “criminal entities” language from their ordinances.

Last November, the Lubbock City Council unanimously rejected the same law after legal counsel advised them that it might not be legal under Texas law. At that time, the council feared that the new ordinance would not only be found illegal but expose the city to litigation.

“I also value life, but this ordinance, as I view it, is not enforceable,” Councilman Juan Chadis said at the time. “My concern is if this ordinance were to pass, we as a city would be exposed to a costly legal battle.”

Now, the City Council is in the position of having to canvass the vote and set a date for the law to take effect.

“On behalf of the City Council, our duty as elected officials is to begin the process of adding the approved ordinance to the City of Lubbock Code of Ordinances, as directed by the Lubbock City Charter,” said the city’s mayor, Dan Pope. “The Lubbock City Council, per state law, will canvass the votes from this election on Tuesday, May 11, with a likely ordinance effective date as early as June 1.”

The City Council in Lubbock might be afraid of the court battle to come with its new designation of “Sanctuary City for the Unborn,” but its citizens have shown that they’re up for the fight — and by a wide margin.



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