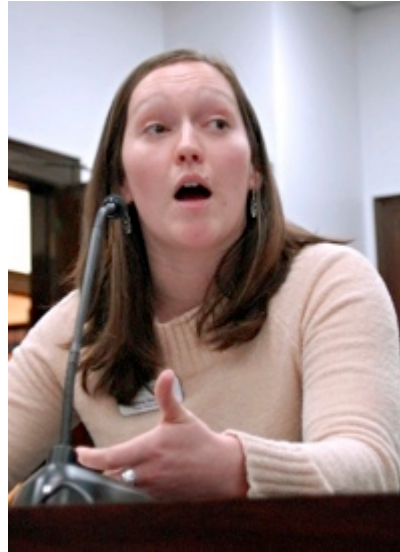




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on December 20, 2010

Alaska Judge Neuters Pro-Life Measure

A judge in Alaska has given a back-handed slap to those standing up for life in his state, by letting stand a law, passed by a vote of the people, requiring abortionists to notify parents if their daughter comes to them for the procedure — but by gutting the law of any prison time or penalties if they neglect to follow the law.



Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW), which operates five abortion centers in Alaska, had sued the state to stop the law from going into effect on December 14, arguing that it represents an invasion of privacy in opposition to the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitutions 14th Amendment.

While Superior Court Judge John Suddock let stand the laws provision requiring abortionists to notify parents and obtain permission from them before performing an abortion on a minor, he dropped the penalty part of the law calling for a fine of up to \$1,000 and imprisonment for up to five years for abortionists who neglect to follow the guidelines.

In addition, Suddock ruled against the section of the law requiring minors who claim physical, emotional, or sexual abuse at the hands of a parent or guardian to provide legal documentation from family or professionals confirming the abuse before a judge could make an exception to the notification law.

Alaska Family Council President Jim Minnery, who had championed the measure among the states electorate, expressed his disappointment at the judges ruling, noting that without a penalty provision there is little motivation for an abortionist to obey the law. Besides Alaska, there are 34 other states requiring parental notification, and every one of those laws includes a penalty provision, said Minnery.

We totally opposed his decision to neuter or take the teeth from the law by eliminating all the legal civil penalties for violating the law, he said.

The law was approved in August by Alaskas voters by a 56 to 44 percent margin. Following the victory, Bernadette Wilson of the organization Alaskans for Parental Rights said the results reflected the concern of the states parents. They want to be there for their girls and they want to be there even when the going gets tough, she said. And I think we sent the message loud and clear that we want to care for these girls, even those girls who come from unhealthy home environments.

Minnery said that Suddocks ruling was in opposition to the will of the people of Alaska, and was an example of a an activist judge legislating from the bench, adding that he would turn his attention to convincing the states supreme court to overturn Suddocks decision. Noted Minnery, Parental involvement laws have been upheld by the United States Supreme Court on nine separate occasions, the last one being a 9-0 decision.



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Photo: Brittany Goodnight, the public affairs manager for the Planned Parenthood of Alaska organization, attempts to sway members of the House Judiciary to vote against House Bill 364, which would require minors to receive parental consent to get an abortion, in Juneau, Alaska Feb. 28,

2008: AP Images



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