



Democrat Chairman: Every Democrat Should Support Abortion Rights

A mayoral race in Omaha has touched off a fierce debate within the national Democratic Party, because their candidate, Heath Mello, supported a tepid pro-life bill in the past. That makes him unacceptable to Thomas Perez (shown), the national chairman of the Democratic Party.



“Every Democrat, like every American, should support a woman’s right to make her own choices about her body and her health,” Perez said in a statement last Friday quoted by the *Huffington Post* and other media. *“That is non-negotiable and should not change city by city or state by state.”* (Emphasis added.)

Amazingly, what the bill that Mello supported would do is require doctors by law to inform women where they can receive ultrasounds before obtaining an abortion. Not that women would have to receive the ultrasound first, but apparently that is “non-negotiable” for the leader of the national Democratic Party. And Perez was considered the more “moderate” choice for the national chair over Congressman Keith Ellison.

Perez even went so far as to say that he “fundamentally disagrees with Heath Mello’s personal beliefs about women’s reproductive health.” One might recall that pro-abortion politicians, Democrat or Republican, have often claimed that they “personally oppose” abortion, but simply believe women should have the freedom to choose abortion. However, Perez seems to go even further, even rejecting the right of a politician to have “personal” beliefs against the practice!

Ilyse Hogue, the national president of the National Abortion Rights Action League’s Pro-Choice America, believed that Mello’s bill, which he supported eight years ago as a Nebraska state senator, was enough for her to condemn any Democrat support for him, calling it “politically stupid.” She said that Mello would “strip women — one of the most critical constituencies of the party — of our basic rights and freedom.”

Daily Kos pulled its endorsement from Mello after discovering that he supported letting women know where they could get a free ultrasound. After all, abortion is so important to Daily Kos that women should be denied even the information that might make some of them decide not to abort their babies.

Such a hard-core position could lead to a real rift within the Democratic Party, which still contains a few pro-life Democrat office-holders — such as Senators Joe Manchin of West Virginia; Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, and Governor John Bel Edwards of Louisiana. (Donald Trump carried all three of those states).

Governor Edwards stated last year that the party needed some pro-life candidates in the Deep South to be successful. “It’s hard to remain a big-tent party if you have a very small platform. We have to make



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our voices heard,” he asserted.

The Pew Research Center polling has revealed that about 30 percent of Democrats say abortion should be illegal in all or mostly all cases. And despite Hogue’s argument that women are one of the “critical constituencies” of the party, women in general are slightly more pro-life than men. Other groups that are often seen as part of the Democratic Party coalition are African-Americans, 35 percent of whom believe abortion should be mostly illegal. Hispanics are even more ardently pro-life, with 49 percent saying abortion should be mostly illegal.

The media has often attempted to drive a wedge between the Republican Party’s pro-life majority and its pro-choice minority, but the reaction to Perez’s comments makes it clear that this can cut both ways. Former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, for example, tried to distance herself from Perez’s attempted ostracism of pro-life Democrats. She told Chuck Todd of *Meet the Press*, “I have served many years in Congress with members who have not shared my very positive, my family would say, aggressive position on promoting a woman’s right to choose.”

Pelosi knows that she never would have been speaker after the 2006 elections if the national party had rejected all pro-life candidates, and if every candidate must be uniformly pro-choice, she is unlikely to win the position again. Even Senator Bernie Sanders said that a candidate in a southern state and a candidate in a liberal state could be expected to have differing views on some issues, such as abortion. Sanders’ own position, which is more favorable to the Second Amendment than the national Democratic Party, has caused him some antagonism with the party. (Sanders is officially an Independent, but he caucuses with the Democrats in the Senate.)

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer told Joe Scarborough of MSNBC’s *Morning Joe* much the same thing: “Look, we’re a big tent party as Nancy Pelosi said, but we are — let’s make no mistake about it, we’re a pro-choice party. We’re a strongly pro-choice party. We think that’s the direction the American people are and, in fact, if anything, are moving more in that direction.”

Despite the reluctance of Pelosi and Schumer to join Perez in rejecting any pro-lifer as a potential Democratic Party candidate (even for mayor of Omaha), the truth remains that the past several Democratic Party candidates for president and vice-president have been uniformly in favor of legalized abortion. The last time the Democrats nominated a candidate for president or vice-president who was pro-life was in 1972, when Senator Thomas Eagleton of Missouri was picked to run with pro-choice George McGovern. (Eagleton was dropped from the ticket, however, after it was revealed that he had undergone some medical treatment for mental health problems.)

It is unthinkable that a genuinely pro-life Democrat could even be seriously considered for the national ticket today.

Perhaps the question that should be asked of any American who believes an unborn child deserves the right to be born is: How can you vote for a political party that has such little regard for human life?

Photo of DNC Chairman Thomas Perez: AP Images



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