



Oklahoma Passes Nation's Strongest Pro-life Law

Nearly all abortions will now be illegal in Oklahoma, under a bill passed by the Oklahoma Legislature on Wednesday. It is being called the most restrictive abortion ban of any state. Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt is expected to quickly sign the bill, as he has signed every pro-life bill that has come to him during his tenure, fulfilling a campaign promise he made when he was first elected in 2018.

Oklahoma's law (House Bill 4327), once signed by the governor, bans abortion from the moment of fertilization — that moment when the sperm unites with the egg. The bill, authored by State Representative Wendi Stearman of Collinsville, passed 73-16.

What will still be allowed under the new law is the use of “morning-after pills” or other types of contraception or emergency contraception. Abortions to save the life of the mother in a medical emergency will still be legal, as well as abortions in case of rape, sexual assault, or incest that have been reported to law enforcement.

While pro-abortion advocates have often called for rape and incest exceptions mostly in an effort to keep all abortions legalized, the reality is that those instances cited are exceedingly rare in comparison to the millions of elective abortions that have been performed in the United States since the 1973 Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*.

In addition, Oklahoma has passed several other laws dealing with abortion this legislative session, including a bill that would criminalize the performing of an abortion, a “trigger law” (to go into effect should the Supreme Court, as expected, reverse their 1973 decision and leave abortion laws up to each state) that would reinstitute the 1910 statute that provided for criminal penalties in performing an abortion, and a “heartbeat law,” which bans abortion once a heartbeat is detected (at about six weeks). The bill passed Wednesday is even stronger, as “fertilization,” of course, happens weeks earlier than the detection of a heartbeat.

Tony Lauinger, the president of Oklahomans for Life, who has been lobbying the Oklahoma Legislature for 45 years, was understandably extremely happy about the action of the Oklahoma Legislature. When contacted by *The New American* on Friday morning, he cautioned that the pro-abortion lobby will not end their advocacy for abortion, saying, “This battle will not end this side of Heaven.”

Lauinger noted that there will still be some who will travel across state lines to states where abortion is legal, so as to obtain an abortion there. In addition to laws against abortion, “We need to win the hearts and minds of the people,” in other states, Lauinger said, adding that this educational effort needs to continue in Oklahoma, as well.

Lauinger was also grateful that the Oklahoma Legislature now allows private citizens to bring civil



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lawsuits against abortion providers. He explained that this is “a great way” to avoid the problem of pro-abortion district attorneys using “prosecutorial discretion” to refuse to file charges against abortionists. This is a position — the use of civil lawsuits — that National Right to Life has pushed for more than a quarter of a century, Lauinger said, adding that it is a “particularly effective complement” to the strong anti-abortion legislation that Oklahoma’s lawmakers have enacted this past session.

The Oklahoma provision encourages private citizens to sue any person who performs an abortion — or helps a woman obtain one — and collect \$10,000 damages.

Debate on the floor of the Oklahoma House of Representatives was intense, with State Representative Denise Crosswhite Hader, a Republican from Piedmont, fighting back tears, telling her fellow lawmakers that she has had three children. One died at 20 weeks, one is a “wonderful daughter,” but a third was an aborted child that she will never know.

Representative Hader said that her two sisters had miscarriages and wanted children, “And yet, here I said I murdered mine.” She added that she deeply regretted what she had done. When she told her daughter that she had had an abortion, years earlier, her daughter “thanked” her for “not killing her,” as well.

While the bill passed overwhelmingly in the Republican-dominated House, some Democrats rose to oppose the legislation. State Representative Cyndi Munson, a Democrat from Oklahoma City, responded to Hader’s powerful remarks, “What she may regret, another person may not.” She claimed that the reason depression and suicide percentages are higher among those who have “made the choice to have abortion” is because “we have stigmatized a healthcare procedure.”

Vice President Kamala Harris, while meeting with abortion advocates at the White House on Thursday, condemned Oklahoma’s pro-life bills. “In Oklahoma, the state legislature passed one of the most extreme abortion bans in the country — a ban that would outlaw abortion from the moment of fertilization,” Harris said. “It’s outrageous, and it’s just the latest in a series of extreme laws around the country.”

These laws defending the lives of unborn children — which Harris describes as “outrageous” and “extreme” — are the culmination of decades of pro-life advocacy. Lauinger told *The New American* that in the late 70s and into the 1980s, he “used to walk into the [Capitol] building and feel an oppressive environment, but over time the values of the people of Oklahoma changed.”

But as Lauinger also said, this battle will not end “this side of Heaven.”



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