

Supreme Court to Decide Tax-Funded Abortions

On November 28, 2001, the Texas Supreme Court considered its most important abortion-related case ever. The Court heard arguments on whether Texas must fund abortion on demand with state taxes under the Medicaid program. At stake are an estimated 13,700 to 27,400 abortions annually, costing taxpayers between \$4,100,000 and \$8,200,000.

The state's current Medicaid policy funds abortions only in (rare) cases when a pregnancy endangers the mother's life or resulted from rape or incest, typically resulting in fewer than two dozen abortions per year in Texas.

Six Texas abortion providers brought the lawsuit to expand Texas' policy to include abortions for any reason, including those for birth control, repeat abortions, partial-birth abortions, and illnesses not requiring abortion. They claim the state constitution guarantees the right to abortion and obligates the state to pay for it.

Pro-life Attorney General John Cornyn defended the State; his attorneys filed briefs and argued before the court. A few days after



the hearing, pro-life Governor Rick Perry also filed a friend-of-the-court brief against expanded abortion coverage.

Also defending the state, Greater Austin Right to Life filed a scholarly 50-page friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of 66 state senators and representatives. The brief represents the view that the Texas Constitution permits the current policy, adopted by the

Dr. Joe Pojman presented GARTL's friend-of-the-court brief at a Capitol news conference along with attorney Paul Linton and dozens of supporters.

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September 11 Tragedy

by Joe Pojman, Ph.D., Exec. Dir.

The tragic events of September 11 serve as a stark reminder of the immeasurable value of innocent human life, and its fragility. We as pro-lifers are especially aware of this.

The terrorists who struck in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania have claimed an enormous human toll. And the fact that all the terrorist bombings occurred on the same day strikes us as all too shocking. As the dust settles in the bomb sites, the death toll is becoming clear — more than 3,500 innocent lives snuffed out and countless family members emotionally scarred.

For those of us who know what abortion really means, we face similar statistics. Abortion claims approximately 3,600 human lives in America every day — 365 days a year. And it leaves countless women and men who are involved in abortion emotionally scarred.

The media will not allow the world to easily forget the “9-11” tragedy that claimed thousands of lives. And well they should. But who will remember the unseen tragedy of each and every abortion? It’s up to us to remind the world that abortion claims thousands of innocent unborn lives everyday. There’s no one else but us.

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Life Matters Update . . .

Cloning Ban Needs Push in Senate

Please write and call our two U.S. Senators from Texas and ask them to support The Human Cloning Prohibition Act (S. 790) by Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS). The Senate will likely take up the issue of human cloning in February or early March. Last summer the U.S. House of Representatives passed a companion bill, H.R. 2505, on a broad bipartisan vote of 265-162.

There is an urgent need for the cloning ban. Recently, Advanced Cell Technology, a Massachusetts biotech firm, announced that it had successfully cloned human beings. Their goal is to create human lives through cloning, in human embryo farms, for the purpose of killing those lives to harvest stem cells. Pro-life President George W. Bush strongly supports this bill.

Please contact Texas’ two U.S. Senators, Phil Gramm and Kay Bailey Hutchison, immediately. Ask them to support the Brownback bill to ban all human cloning, S. 790. Letters and calls should be brief and polite. Call both senators through the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 225-3121. Here’s the mailing address:

The Honorable (Phil Gramm or Kay Bailey Hutchison)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Voters Guides Available for Primary Elections

The March Primary elections are fast approaching. Election Day is Tuesday, March 12, with Early Voting beginning on February 25. These elections are when the Democratic and Republican parties choose their candidates to be placed on the November ballot, at all levels of government, from the U.S. Senate to local county commissioners.



Greater Austin Right to Life will have voters guides available to help you make informed votes. We cover a broad range of issues, and we give information on how to get involved in both parties’ Precinct Conventions, held the evening of March 12. The parties begin building their platforms at their precinct conventions.

Look for your GARTL Voters Guide in the mail or call us at (512) 477-1244 to order copies for your friends and neighbors and for your church.

Texas Parental Notification Act Reducing Abortions

When then-Governor George Bush signed the Texas Parental Notification Act into law in 1999, pro-lifers predicted a drop in births, pregnancies, and abortions for minors.

The results for the first full year of operation show just that. According to recently released Texas Department of Health figures, in 2000 for Texas girls 17 years of age and younger, births dropped 2.4%, pregnancies declined 5.6%, and abortions dropped a

New Maternity Homes Offer Assistance

by **Melanie Samuelson**

One of the most important functions of those who support the pro-life movement is helping girls and women who are experiencing crisis pregnancies. Countless women and their families have found comfort and support through the many organizations that exist to provide everything from maternity clothes and prenatal care to job placement assistance and babysitting.

In the past year alone, two new maternity homes have opened in the greater Austin area. Add these to the many assistance-oriented organizations already in existence and the extended network of support for women in crisis pregnancies becomes clear.

The Annunciation Maternity Home in Georgetown and Sarah's House Maternity Home in Austin, opened in April and August of 2001 respectively, offer a new beginning for women who are experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. Both are nonprofit organizations, depending solely upon the generosity of various groups and individuals.

The Annunciation Maternity Home offers long-term care beginning when the resident arrives and ending only when the mother and child have a dependable environment in which to live. "The mother and child may live here for up to two years if need be," said Christie Aaronson, president of Annunciation's board of directors.

The maternity home rests on a secluded Georgetown pasture, providing a sense of privacy and peacefulness to the women living there. A series of soft-colored rooms contribute to the home's warmth. Currently, there are three women living in the maternity home. In addition to these women, others are taking part in the educational enrichment opportunities available through the home. The program allows the women to continue their education through a UT charter school. Other programs such as job assistance, parenting, spirituality development, and life skills are also available. Life skills programs teach the women banking, budgeting, house cleaning, cooking, and basic auto care skills.

Sarah's House Maternity Home, a division of Breath of Life Ministries, is a Christian program for expectant mothers who are 18 years or older and need housing or other assistance.

Currently two women live at Sarah's house.

Activities available through the home include weekly counseling with a Christian family counselor, classes on nutrition, financial management, adoption, home

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One of the many success stories at Sarah's House Maternity Home.



Resident house parents Julie and Greg Alexander talk with a resident at Annunciation Maternity Home.

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Changing Hearts, Together

by Mary M. Morales

On the evening of Thursday, Oct. 18th, GARTL hosted its Ninth Annual Benefit Banquet "Changing Hearts Together" at the recently opened Hilton Airport Hotel. The event attracted four hundred supporters, making it the most successful banquet in GARTL's history.

The event featured both live and silent auctions, and two highly respected guest speakers. The Most Rev. Gregory Aymond, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Austin, gave the invocation and shared his thoughts on the importance of the pro-life movement. Pastor Bob Long, of Bastrop Christian Fellowship, gave the benediction, and DeeAnn Smith served as MC.

Janet Folger, national director of the Center for Reclaiming America, gave the keynote address; focusing on her simple pro-life message, how to say it, and her initial apprehension toward talking about it publicly.

Folger explained that it's not that difficult to communicate why abortion is wrong, yet some of us still struggle to tell others. She

then pointed out signs that show that Americans are ready to hear the pro-life message, at least in the religious arena, following the

September 11 terrorist attacks: increased Bible sales, increased church attendance, and a greater awareness of evil.

"One of the things we learned [in September] is that evil exists and it must be stopped," she said.

How? By speaking up for the innocent, for the unborn.

Even someone as dedicated as Folger can become discouraged at times. While giving a speech in Ohio to a church youth group, she limped through a presentation. She felt she been very ineffective in her talk. "I wanted to quit in 1992, and had I known [an end to abortion] would be so long a fight, I might have." Years later, however, she learned that a girl at the talk decided to not have an abortion because of what she had heard.

She persisted through work as the spokeswoman for Ohio Right to Life and 10 years of lobbying lawmakers, during which she

c o u n t s among her successes a speech where she had a mother bring her young daughter onto the stage.

"I held up my 1965 *Life* magazine," an issue with an unborn baby's

image on the cover, "and asked the little girl, What is this?" "Baby!" the child replied. The pro-life message is that simple, Folger said.



Dedicated staff and volunteers included (l to r) Cathy Brocato, Peggy Gerke, Wanda Henry, and Rita Vaglica.

“Once a woman is pregnant, she has a child. So the question is whether it will be born a live baby or a dead baby.”

“We are working in support of a live baby; [opponents] are working to support the choice of a dead baby,” she said. “Live baby, good. Dead baby, bad,” Folger recited, and invited GARTL banquet attendees to repeat it with her.

In addition to delivering a succinct message, pro-lifers must be visible, active members in their communities. She said that all too often we limit ourselves to our own friends or church groups, when we should be seeking opportunities to reach out to others, namely those who don’t always share our values.

For example, she once sneaked into a meeting where an Ohio gubernatorial candidate, who had been pro-life at one time, was to assure pro-abortion voters that he would affirm their position. He had brushed off pro-lifers by claiming to remain personally pro-life while considering the right to an abortion “good public policy.”

During the question-and-answer session, Folger was called upon and asked, using the candidate’s own words, “How could something you personally think is ‘murder’ be good public policy?” The candidate fumbled his response, and the incident was published on the front page of the next day’s *New York Times*.

Using another tactic, she successfully equated in the minds of lawmakers “parental consent for abortion” with “parental consent for tattoos.” Ohio lawmakers had



Keynote speaker Janet Folger signed many copies of her book True to Life.

enthusiastically passed the tattoo law. And shortly before the parental consent law for abortion was to be introduced, Folger created fliers explaining the need for parental involvement in the life-or-death decision to have an abortion, highlighting most lawmakers’ previous support of the arguably less critical parental consent for tattoos law. She sent the fliers to lawmakers and the media, and opponents of the law backed off.

Reflecting on her life’s work, which appears far from over, Folger says: “Our God is bigger than any abortion industry.” So when you’re delivering the pro-life message, remember: “if you need creativity, go to the Creator.”

For more information about the Center for Reclaiming America and Janet Folger’s new book, *True to Life*, go to the Internet Web site <http://www.reclaimamerica.org/PAGES/janetfolger.asp>.

Mary M. Morales is a member of GARTL’s Board of Directors and a former editor of Life Matters. She is an editor for an Internet publishing company.

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Mark Powell
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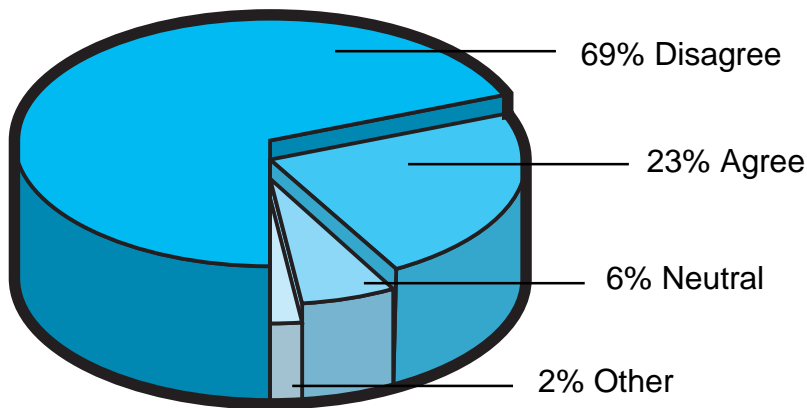
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Texas Legislature, of funding Medicaid abortions for rape, incest, and endangerment to the mother's life, but not abortions on demand. (Background information and a copy of the brief is available at the GARTL web site, www.gartl.org.) GARTL's president Christopher Maska, counsel for the legislators, assisted internationally renowned attorney Paul Linton in writing the brief, which was funded in part through a grant from the Alliance Defense Fund.

The day before the hearing, GARTL presented the brief and the results of a Fall 2001 Scripps Howard Texas Poll at a Capitol news conference. The poll showed overwhelming opposition to tax-funded abortions with 69% of adult Texans against the funding and only 23% supporting it, a 3-1 margin.

The Court is expected to release its decision sometime during 2002.

Texans Oppose Abortion Funding 3-1



The Fall 2001 Scripps Howard Texas Poll of 1,000 adult Texans, conducted November 2–21, asked the following question: "Do you agree or disagree that the state government should pay for abortions for any woman who wants it and cannot afford to pay?"

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safety, single parenting, cooking, and crafts. To stress personal responsibility, residents must abide by guidelines with regard to working, attending school, personal counseling, and daily chores. Volunteers and professionals teach the women how to not only be responsible for themselves, but also how to reach their goals, both emotionally and financially. A set of full-time volunteers lives with the women to provide constant support and assistance.

For more information or assistance in a crisis pregnancy, contact Annunciation Maternity Home at (512) 864-7755 or Sarah's House Maternity Home at (512) 219-8322.

Melanie Samuelson recently graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Journalism.

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Operation Outcry

by Kathleen Cassidy, J.D.

Operation Outcry needs post-abortive women to come forward to tell the courts that abortion hurts, not helps, women. Cases are already being litigated in New Jersey and in a United States Court of Appeals, where Norma McCorvey, the “Jane Roe” of *Roe v. Wade*, has spoken in support of Operation Outcry.



Norma McCorvey

Operation Outcry needs post-abortive women across the United States to come forward and tell the courts how their lives have been damaged by abortion, focusing not only on their physical injuries, but also on the devastating emotional trauma, pain, and suffering.

Every woman who has suffered in any way from abortion is being asked to fill out an affidavit describing the harmful effects of abortion. An affidavit is a statement of facts reduced to writing and affirmed by a notary. The affidavits of post-abortive women that are sent to us will be used as evidence in court of the harm abortion does to women. Many women say that writing down their story sets them free from the feeling of shame associated with abortion. It is through these courageous women's stories that other women will not have to go through similar suffering. Regardless of when the abortion occurred, 2 weeks ago or 20 years ago, each woman's story is needed. A woman's name may remain confidential if she checks the box asking that only her initials be used. Help is available to answer any questions. The women on staff at the Texas Justice Foundation, some of whom are post-abortive, will help women fill out the forms, toll free at 1-877-247-7582.

Women who have not experienced abortion are also needed to fill out a friend-of-the-court form to tell the courts that, “It is not in the human or legal interest of any mother to kill her own child. A mother's true interest is in her child's life and her relationship with her child. *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned.” Please join with other women who are “silent not more” and become part of this history-making effort to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

The Texas Justice Foundation is representing Norma McCorvey and Sandra Cano, the “Doe” of the *Doe v. Bolton* companion case to *Roe v. Wade*. Both of these ladies are now seeking to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court decisions that brought abortion to American in their names.

Kathleen Cassidy is Senior Staff Attorney and Women's Health Force Task Leader at the Texas Justice Foundation in San Antonio.

Life Matters

is the newsletter of the Greater Austin Right to Life Committee and the GARTL Educational Trust Fund. *Life Matters* is published quarterly and is free of charge. Our circulation is 10,000 households and churches.

Greater Austin Right to Life

is a nonpartisan, nonsectarian organization which exists to secure the right to life of all innocent human beings from conception until natural death. We oppose abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. We condone only legal, peaceful activities.

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A Call for Action

**Saturday, January 26, 2002
at Our State Capitol building
in Austin**

1:00 p.m.

**Assemble for March
(Guadalupe and 4th)**

1:30 p.m.

**March to the Capitol
(Congress Ave.)**

2:00 p.m.

**Rally for Life and Family
(south steps of Capitol)**