

# Support HB 3374: Down Syndrome Information Act by Reps. Geanie Morrison and Brooks Landgraf

**Goal:** Texas Alliance for Life supports a requirement that parents receiving a Down syndrome diagnosis also receive state-prepared information that provides valuable medical and science based information.

## **Background:**

Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring genetic condition. According to the National Down Syndrome Society, one in every 691 babies in the United States is born with Down syndrome. If these numbers are applied to Texas, that would mean in 2012, 553 babies were born with Down syndrome.

Despite being the most common genetic condition, the abortion rate on babies diagnosed with Down syndrome is likely somewhere between 61 and 93 percent,<sup>1</sup> which corresponds to thousands of abortions on babies with Down syndrome in Texas each year.

## **House Bill 3374:**

HB 3374 would provide parents receiving a Down syndrome diagnosis with timely information. HB 3374 requires the state-prepared information to address the following:

- Physical, developmental, educational, and psychological outcomes.
- Intellectual and functional development.
- Available treatment options.
- Contact information for national and local Down syndrome education and support programs and services.

All the information must be current and evidence-based, and it must be reviewed by local and national Down syndrome organizations.

Importantly, this state-prepared information may not present abortion as an option, as will be prohibited in the committee substitute offered by Rep. Geanie Morrison.

Per the Supreme Court decisions *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, this bill does not limit a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy. It also does not prohibit a doctor from speaking about abortion.

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<sup>1</sup> "Prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome: a systematic review of termination rates (1995-2011)," by Jaime L. Natoli, Deborah L. Ackerman, Suzanne McDermott, and Janice Edward, *Prenatal Diagnosis*, 2012.