

Pro-Life Accomplishments **of the Texas Legislature in 2015**

In 2015, the Texas Legislature accomplished sensational pro-life gains. Under the leadership of **Gov. Greg Abbott**, **Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick**, and **Speaker Joe Straus**, the Legislature passed five major pro-life bills, increased funding for alternatives to abortion, defunded Planned Parenthood, and passed several other important pro-life measures including numerous pro-life provisions in the General Appropriations Act, HB 1.

1. Defund Planned Parenthood (HB 1, General Appropriations Act by Rep. John Otto/Sen. Jane Nelson).

- Continue exclusions from funding for women's health programs (\$29 of \$31 million/yr) by Department of State Health Service Rider 63 and Health and Human Services Commission Riders 29, 74, 85, 87, and 88.
- Exclude Planned Parenthood from the Breast and Cervical Cancer Services (BCCS) program, resulting in an additional loss of \$1.4 million/yr.

2. Reform the judicial bypass process for abortions performed on minor girls (HB 3994 by Rep. Geanie Morrison/Sen. Charles Perry).

- Keep written, notarized parental consent requirement.
- Reform the judicial bypass process to eliminate loopholes. Stop venue shopping, increase standard of evidence, lengthen timeline, separate guardian-ad-litem and attorney-ad-litem, etc.

3. Protect victims of sex trafficking at abortion facilities (HB 416 by Rep. Debbie Riddle/Sen. Donna Campbell).

- Require abortion facility workers and volunteers to undergo training to recognize and assist victims of human sex trafficking.

4. Reform end-of-life care laws to increase protections for vulnerable patients (HB 3074 by Rep. Drew Springer/Sen. Charles Schwertner).

- Create a right to food and water at the end of life if the patient or family desire it.
- Maintain conscience protections for doctors so they are not forced to provide harmful or unethical treatments indefinitely.

5. Protect unborn babies with disabilities (HB 3374 by Rep. Geanie Morrison/Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr. with pro-life amendment by Rep. Brooks Landgraf).

- Provide state-created educational materials to parents of unborn babies diagnosed with Down syndrome without referrals for abortion.

6. Prevent public school sexuality education programs from promoting abortion (HB 1, General Appropriations Act).

- Ban on Medicaid funding for sexuality education to abortion providers or their affiliates (HHSC Rider 31 by Rep. Jeff Leach).
- Limit sexuality education spending to only programs that comply with each of the federal A-H components of abstinence education and write an annual report to be submitted to the Legislature on contractor compliance (DSHS Rider 55 by Rep. Four Price and Rep. Molly White).

7. Increase funding for alternatives to abortion from \$5.15 to \$9.15 million/yr (HB 1, General Appropriations Act amendment by Rep. Greg Bonnen).

8. Promote adult, not embryonic, stem cell research and treatments.

- \$2.5 million/yr for Texas Heart Institute Adult Stem Cell Program (HB 1, General Appropriations Act).
- \$1 million/yr for umbilical cord stem cell banks (HB 1, General Appropriations Act).
- Create the Texas Adult Stem Cell Research Consortium (HB 177 by Rep. Bill Zedler/Sen. Paul Bettencourt).

9. Require disclosure of sponsors of research projects at public universities like the Texas Policy Evaluation Project at The University of Texas at Austin, which opposes pro-life laws passed by the Legislature.

- Require reporting of sponsors of research in public communications (amendment by Rep. Phil King to HB 1260 and SB 20).
- Require universities to respond to public information requests for the sponsor information (amendment by Sen. Kelly Hancock to HB 1295).

10. Require counties to report on pregnant women in county jails who suffer miscarriages (HB 1140 by Rep. Celia Israel/Sen. John Whitmire).

11. Numerous other pro-life provisions in HB 1 in the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) budgets:

- DSHS Rider 14 and HHSC Rider 8 continue to require contractors to report suspected child abuse, including statutory rape.
- HHSC Riders 31 and 86 continue to prohibit dispensing prescription drugs such as birth control drugs and devices to minors without parental consent.