Gov. Perry Signs Historic Pro-Life Legislation

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Gov. Rick Perry today was joined by Texas legislators to stand for life and sign House Bill 2, which protects unborn babies after the fifth month of a pregnancy and raises standards for women's health care in Texas.

"This is an important day for those who support life and for those who support the health of Texas women," Gov. Perry said. "In signing House Bill 2, we celebrate and further cement the foundation on which the culture of life in Texas is built."

HB 2 builds on Texas' strong pro-life efforts by banning abortions after the fifth month of a pregnancy. The bill also requires physicians who perform abortions to have hospital admitting privileges at a facility within 30 miles. Additionally, it mandates that only a physician may dispense or administer abortion-inducing drugs, and requires the physician to comply with all FDA guidelines for the drug. The bill also requires licensed abortion facilities to meet the same minimum safety standards as ambulatory surgical centers, beginning Sept. 1, 2014.

"New research and advanced technology give prematurely-born children a renewed chance at life, which should give us all pause as we argue the definition of viability and consider the human impact of abortion," Gov. Perry said. "Additionally, House Bill 2 ensures that anyone performing abortions in Texas is doing so in a facility that is safe, clean and prepared to deal with any emergencies that might occur - a reasonable, common sense expectation for those caring for the health and safety of Texans."

Gov. Perry continues to be a staunch defender of life in Texas. He has signed legislation requiring parents to consent to their minor daughter's abortion, banning tax dollars from being used to support abortion facilities, and requiring women to have a sonogram before an abortion. The governor has also fought to ensure Texas women get the health services they need, including $100 million in new funding to expand women's health services and creating the Texas Women's Health Program.

To view the governor's full remarks from the bill signing ceremony, please visit http://governor.state.tx.us/news/speech/18757/.
Thank you all for being here today.

This is an important day for those who support life and for those who support the health of Texas women.

In signing House Bill 2 today, we celebrate and further cement the foundation on which the culture of life in Texas is built.

This is a bill that protects unborn babies after the fifth month of a pregnancy.

We know that not very far past that point, children can survive - and thrive - with appropriate care.

New research and advanced technology give prematurely-born children a renewed chance at life, and I think that should give pause to us all as we argue the definition of viability and consider the human impact of abortion.

And at five months, many studies indicate these children feel the pain of their own deaths.

It is our responsibility and duty to give voice to the unborn, the individuals whose very survival is at stake.

This bill lives up to that responsibility.

It is also our responsibility to improve the quality of care women receive, ensuring that any procedure they undergo is performed in clean, sanitary and safe conditions, by capable personnel.

We've witnessed far too many stories - from Philadelphia to Houston and elsewhere - about reckless doctors performing abortions in horrific conditions.

We've heard stories about women getting sick - even dying - after treatment at such places.

At the end of the day, House Bill 2 makes sure that anyone performing abortions in the State of Texas is doing so in a facility that meets appropriate safety guidelines, and that people there are prepared to handle any emergencies that might occur.

That is a reasonable, common sense expectation for those caring for the health and safety of Texans.
Today's signing, though, definitively builds upon our continued commitment to protecting life in the State of Texas.

Over the past 10 years we've passed laws requiring parental consent to their minor daughter's abortion, ensuring parents will be involved, ready to provide much-needed guidance and advice at the most critical of moments.

We've funded and promoted alternatives to abortion, providing counseling for women on the other options - options that won't stop their child's beating heart.

Because children deserve the respect of simple recognition before their lives are tragically cut short.

I'd like to thank everyone involved in making today's signing a possibility, including Gov. Dewhurst and Speaker Straus, the bill's authors and sponsors, and everyone who stood for life throughout this process.

Now, I'd like to have our Lt. Governor say a few words. Governor?

Thank you, Governor. And now, I'd like to introduce the author of the legislation, Rep. Jodie Laubenberg. Representative?

Last, but by no means least, an individual who worked very hard to see this bill finally get passed, the Senate sponsor of HB 2, Sen. Glenn Hegar. Senator?

Thank you. Now, let's sign this bill.