

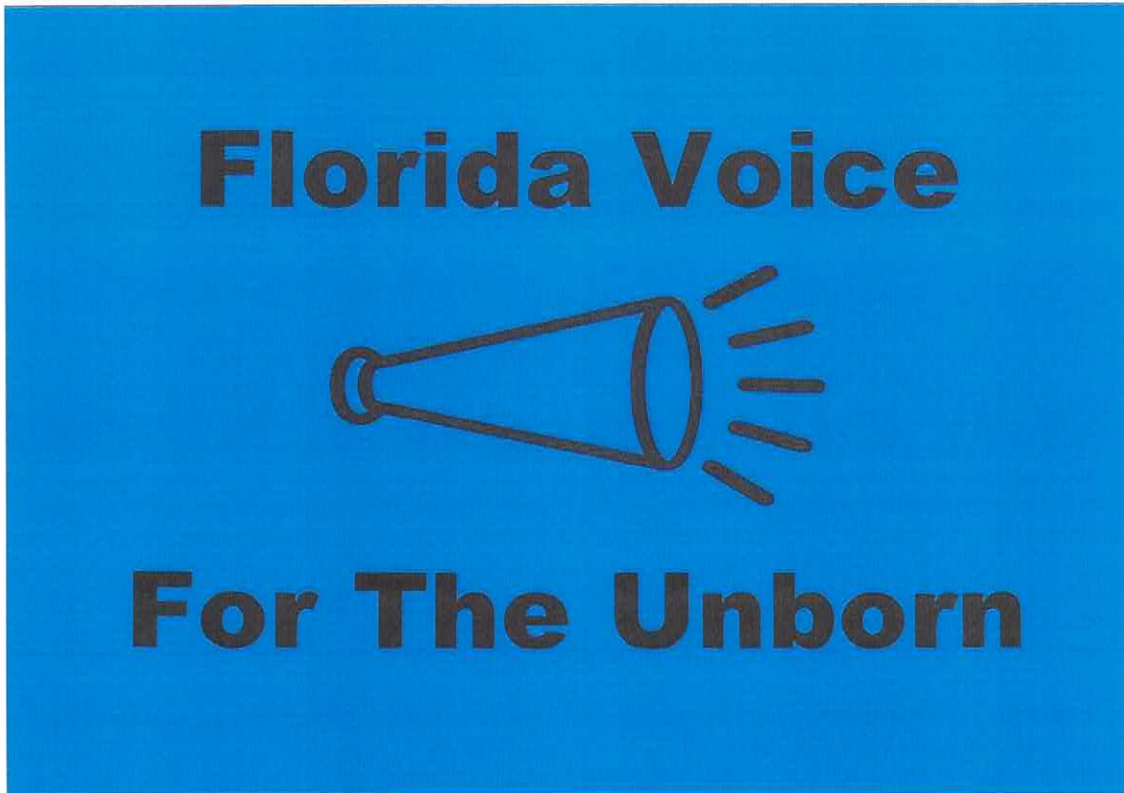
Baby Box Bill ACTION ALERT and More!

Florida Voice for the Unborn <Andrew@FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com>

Mon 1/25/2021 10:04 AM

To: Andrew Shirvell <andrew@floridavoicefortheunborn.com>

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Dear Friend of the Unborn:

This is Florida Voice for the Unborn's first "Grassroots Action Alert" of 2021! I want to especially welcome all of you who signed-up for Florida Voice for the Unborn's e-mail list at the St. Augustine March for Life, the Alpha Women's Center Sanctity of Human Life Breakfast in Flagler County, and the Tampa Bay March for Life!

This alert is broken into two sections. The first half is informational and discusses newly-filed state pro-life legislation that, if enacted, will ban abortions in Florida starting at 20 weeks (5 months) gestation. The second part of this e-mail asks you to immediately contact members of the Florida Senate's Health Policy Committee, in our effort to advance Senate Bill 122 (the "Baby Box Bill").

**I. The "2021 Florida Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act"**

Last Wednesday, state Rep. Tommy Gregory (R—Manatee & Sarasota Counties) filed this Act in the state House of Representatives (House Bill 351).

It is being co-sponsored by state Rep. David Borrero (R—Broward, Collier, & Miami-Dade Counties). On January 22, 2021 – the 48th heartbreaking anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* – state Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez (R—Miami-Dade & Monroe Counties) filed the companion legislation in the state Senate (Senate Bill 744).

This Act would prohibit abortions in Florida on unborn children who are capable of feeling pain. Medical advances have shown that this point in a woman's pregnancy is reached around 20 weeks gestation. Similar 20-week bans have been enacted in about 23 other states. Currently, the majority of these bans are in effect, with the rest having been enjoined (stopped) by various courts. While all abortions are heinous and wrong, banning abortions here in Florida at 20 weeks gestation is a further step in the right direction. In accordance with our mission, Florida Voice for the Unborn supports this late-term abortion ban just as we would support a ban on abortions beginning at the moment of conception or when a heartbeat can be detected. We also strongly applaud Rep. Gregory, Rep. Borrero, and Senator Rodriguez for their pro-life leadership.

The Act, like similar bans in sister states, was designed by the Susan B. Anthony List ("SBA List"), a nationally-known pro-life group based in Washington, D.C. In 2019, pro-life Florida legislators filed similar legislation, which did not receive a single committee hearing in either chamber of our state Legislature. It was not refiled in 2020.

At this stage, I believe the chances of getting this late-term abortion ban enacted during the upcoming 2021 Legislative Session are 50/50. We are going to really have to press Speaker of the House Chris Sprowls and Senate President Wilton Simpson to get this legislation moving quickly; otherwise it will suffer the same fate as it did in 2019.

Based upon the most recent statistics available, it is estimated that over 900 unborn babies are annually killed in Florida abortions at 20 weeks or more gestation. Right now, I am reviewing the text of the 2021 Act to see if it may need any amendments to ensure that we are saving as many unborn lives as possible. As a Tallahassee-based pro-life grassroots lobbying group, Florida Voice for the Unborn will play a key role in effectively advocating for this life-saving legislation's enactment. I will keep you updated to let you know how YOU can help!

## **II. The "Baby Box Bill" (Senate Bill 122)**

This bill is scheduled for its first hearing this Wednesday, January 27th, before the Senate Health Policy Committee. As I explained in my last e-mail update right before Christmas, this bill will amend Florida's existing Safe Haven Law to explicitly permit the use of baby boxes for the safe surrendering of newborn infants at hospitals, fire stations, and emergency medical service stations that are staffed 24 hours a day. It is being sponsored by pro-life stalwart state Senator Dennis Baxley (R—Sumter, Lake, & Marion Counties). An identical bill was filed in the state House of Representatives on December 29th.

Remember, this same bill died during the 2020 Legislative Session because it did not pass through its required Senate committees. Due in large part to Florida Voice for the Unborn's lobbying, we've been able to change the

committee assignments for the bill heading into this year's Legislative Session. So, things are looking much better this time around, but we cannot take anything for granted. Unbelievably, there is a tiny but very vocal faction in the Safe Haven community that opposes baby boxes. This faction's opposition is not based in reality, but rather on the fact that Monica Kelsey, the founder of the Indiana-based Safe Haven Baby Boxes organization, is an outspoken pro-life activist who is against abortion (she was also conceived in rape and abandoned as a newborn by her biological mother). Nonetheless, this bill has garnered bipartisan support in the past. Hence, our legislators – both pro-life Republicans and pro-abortion Democrats – need to here from us about why they must pass this commonsense bill out of the Senate Health Policy Committee. Here are some short, key talking points:

- A baby box is actually a temperature-controlled safety device that accepts surrendered newborn infants and comes equipped with an alarm system that is triggered once a newborn is placed inside. A form of these devices has been around for centuries in many places throughout the globe. The modern-day baby boxes, provided through Safe Haven Baby Boxes, are completely safe.
- Senate Bill 122 provides necessary regulations governing the use of a baby box, such as by requiring Florida baby box locations to have an adequate surveillance system that is in working condition 24 hours a day.
- Senate Bill 122 increases the age at which an infant may be legally surrendered, from 7 days to 30 days old. This increase is needed to give mothers more options for safely surrendering their newborns. Illegal infant abandonments, which have led to death, do not just occur in the first week following an infant's birth.
- Baby boxes have a proven track record of deterring illegal newborn abandonments and saving lives. Since Indiana installed the nation's first Safe Haven Baby Box several years ago, there have been no reported illegal newborn abandonments in that state. And in 2019, Indiana had 9 newborn infants surrendered via baby boxes.

**Please utilize one or more of the above talking points and contact as many of the senators on the Health Policy Committee as possible (listed below) by e-mailing them (just click on the e-mail link to write and send a short message) and/or by calling them.** Due to mandated COVID-19 precautions, many of the legislators do not have enough staff with them in their Tallahassee offices to man their office phones. So, I have also taken the liberty of providing you with their district office numbers as well. If you call and no one picks-up, just leave a polite, short voicemail message expressing support for Senate Bill 122. And when calling and e-mailing always remember to mention that you're with Florida Voice for the Unborn!

**Here is the contact info for the senators on the Health Policy Committee:**

**Chair Manny Diaz (R):** (850) 487-5036 & (305) 364-3073 &

[Diaz.Manny@flsenate.gov](mailto:Diaz.Manny@flsenate.gov)

**Vice Chair Jason Brodeur (R):** (850) 487-5009 & (407) 333-1802 &

[Brodeur.Jason@flsenate.gov](mailto:Brodeur.Jason@flsenate.gov)

**Ben Albritton (R):** (850) 487-5026 & (863) 534-0073 &

[Albritton.Ben@flsenate.gov](mailto:Albritton.Ben@flsenate.gov)

**Dennis Baxley (R):** (850) 487-5012 & (352) 750-3133 &

[Baxley.Dennis@flsenate.gov](mailto:Baxley.Dennis@flsenate.gov) Note: he's the bill sponsor, so THANK him for sponsoring it!

**Aaron Bean (R):** (850) 487-5004 or (904) 757-5039 &

[Bean.Aaron@flsenate.gov](mailto:Bean.Aaron@flsenate.gov)

**Ileana Garcia (R):** (850) 487-5037 or (305) 442-6841 &

[Garcia.Ileana@flsenate.gov](mailto:Garcia.Ileana@flsenate.gov)

**Lauren Book (D):** (850) 487-5032 & (954) 424-6674 &

[Book.Lauren@flsenate.gov](mailto:Book.Lauren@flsenate.gov) Note: she's the chief legislative opponent of the bill.

**Janet Cruz (D):** (850) 487-5018 & (813) 348-1017 & [Cruz.Janet@flsenate.gov](mailto:Cruz.Janet@flsenate.gov)

**Gary Farmer (D):** (850) 487-5034 & (954) 467-4227 &

[Farmer.Gary@flsenate.gov](mailto:Farmer.Gary@flsenate.gov)

**Shev Jones (D):** (850) 487-5035 & (305) 493-6002 &

[Jones.Shevrin@flsenate.gov](mailto:Jones.Shevrin@flsenate.gov)

I will be testifying at Wednesday's committee hearing. If you'd like to join me, please reply to this message and let me know! Do not go to the Capitol building! Instead, due to mandated COVID-19 precautions, remote testimony will only be received from Room A3 at the Donald L. Civic Center, 505 W. Pensacola Street, Tallahassee. The Civic Center has free parking, and you should arrive by 8:30 a.m. since Senate Bill 122 will be taken-up anytime between 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. this Wednesday!

**Finally, if you can financially help our efforts, we are in need of continual assistance to keep fighting the good fight in Tallahassee.** We accomplish more work in a week than some groups – with grossly inflated budgets – do in a month! To donate via our secure website, please [CLICK HERE](#). You may also send a check (made out to "Florida Voice for the Unborn") to the following address:

Florida Voice for the Unborn  
P.O. Box 12152  
Tallahassee, FL 32317

Any amount you can spare is greatly appreciated and put to very good use. Thank you for your generosity and for your prayers!

Together, let's continue to be a LOUD voice for our voiceless unborn brothers and sisters!

P.S. Don't forget to contact the Senate Health Policy Committee members (listed above) about passing Senate Bill 122 (the "Baby Box Bill"). We need to be louder than the opposition! Thank you for doing your part in lobbying our lawmakers!

For Their Lives,



Andrew Shirvell, J.D.  
Founder & Executive Director  
Florida Voice for the Unborn

Florida Voice for the Unborn is a Tallahassee-based grassroots lobbying group that only focuses on pro-life issues impacting the unborn. It is strictly independent, and its work is guided by faith in God's only Son, Jesus Christ. Florida Voice for the Unborn supports all peaceful efforts by elected officials and others to end abortion and save lives. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Parler @UnbornVoiceFL – and visit our website [HERE](#).



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