

## Recap of Our Meeting with Speaker Renner!

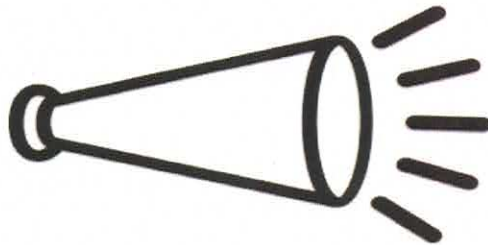
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Thu 3/2/2023 11:59 AM

To: Andrew Shirvell <andrew@floridavoicefortheunborn.com>

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# Florida Voice



# For The Unborn

[FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com](http://FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com)

Dear Friend of the Unborn:

The annual regular 60-day Florida Legislative Session is set to begin in just a few days on Tuesday, March 7, 2023!

If you attended Florida Voice for the Unborn's exclusive February 20th meeting with Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives Paul Renner – either in-person or remotely – then you know Renner dropped some big news about the upcoming Session, and you also know that we presented the Speaker with a “surprise” of our own!

But if you could not attend, below is a short summary of our meeting, which is followed by additional commentary and an urgent “Grassroots Action Alert” directed at the key decision-makers in our quest to “Make Florida Totally Abortion Free!” So here we go...

**[Our February 20th Meeting with Florida House Speaker Paul Renner](#)**

In addition to myself, eight other Florida grassroots pro-life advocates, including the head of our partner organization, Family for LIFE, were present in-person for the meeting with Speaker Renner, which took place in his office's large conference room. Also in the room were Renner's Chief of Staff, Allison Carter, and his Director of Communications, Andres Malave. The Speaker sat at the head of the conference table; I sat next to him on his right while Trudy, the head of Family for LIFE, sat next to him on his left. On the back wall of the conference room, in the direct sight of the Speaker, was a large, elevated screen that contained our many, many supporters who joined the meeting remotely through the use of the Webex platform or via the conference call option.

Our meeting with Speaker Renner took place nearly eight months after the U.S. Supreme Court officially overturned *Roe v. Wade* and returned to the states the rightful authority to completely protect all unborn children, from the moment of conception. Despite our relentless advocacy for a comprehensive statewide law ensuring full protection for the unborn, our pro-life supermajority Legislature and our pro-life Governor have failed, thus far, to act. Accordingly, our 20-minute meeting with the Speaker, while cordial, also placed him in the proverbial "hot seat."

To begin the meeting, I made some brief introductions and then handed Speaker Renner one of our (blank) pro-life postcards that we had delivered to his office during our November 22nd PRO-LIFE DAY OF ACTION.

Dear Florida Legislature,

The "Free State of Florida" cannot be truly free until you act to make it TOTALLY abortion free! In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's reversal of *Roe v. Wade*, I request that you promptly pass legislation protecting all unborn children, from the moment of conception. Now is the time to end abortion in Florida forever! **\*\*NO MORE EXCUSES\*\***

Sincerely,

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

A joint project of Florida Voice for the Unborn and Family for LIFE | Postcards will be hand delivered to legislative leaders on November 22, 2022. More info: [FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com](http://FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com) or [ffl@familyforlife.info](mailto:ffl@familyforlife.info)

I then asked him two questions: 1) what happened to those postcards?; and 2) what "further pro-life legislative protections for the unborn" could we expect to be passed during the upcoming regular Legislative Session?

As to the postcards, Speaker Renner asked his Chief of Staff to explain. Ms. Carter related that all of our postcards delivered on November 22nd (over 2,000



of them) were inadvertently misplaced and lost when they were moved out of the Speaker's office suite due to a carpet replacement. Ms. Carter took full responsibility for the mishap.

Next, Speaker Renner told us what the Legislature planned to do for our unborn brothers and sisters. According to the Speaker, legislation further prohibiting abortion in Florida would likely not be introduced in the usual manner. [In the regular process, bills in both the House and Senate would need to be filed by noon on the first day of the Session (March 7th)]. **Rather, Speaker Renner said that the anticipated legislation would be introduced as a proposed committee bill sometime during the 60-day Session.** He remained very vague as to specifics, although he stated (repeatedly) that the bill that is likely to be introduced "may not be the one you want."

Speaker Renner said he believed that life should be protected at conception, but that he also believed the people of Florida were not in favor of that position. Nonetheless, the Speaker somewhat contradictorily attempted to assure us that he was not driven by "polls" on "this issue."

After the Speaker finished his answer to my second question, I turned the reigns over to my colleague, Trudy, the head of Family for LIFE. Trudy handed Speaker Renner the most recent Florida abortion statistics from the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, explaining to him that 1) over 82,000 abortions have (thus far) been recorded in our state for 2022, which represents a substantial increase from 2021 and a 14-year high; 2) Florida has become an abortion destination state with more women than ever before traveling here to obtain abortions at one of our 50 plus abortion facilities; and 3) the number of second trimester abortions had increased from 2021 despite the 15-week abortion ban passed by the Legislature last year and in effect since July, 2022.

Trudy also handed the Speaker a map of the U.S., showing all of the abortion-free states since the fall of *Roe v. Wade* (many of which surround Florida). Speaker Renner seemed confused about the legal status of abortion in Texas and insinuated that Texas' novel Heartbeat Law was the law of the land in the Lone Star State. After he did so, I interjected by pointing out that, in June 2021, Texas enacted a so-called "trigger law" banning ALL abortions, which went into effect approximately 60 days after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe*. I then told Renner that this "trigger law," which provides for criminal penalties for abortionists who violate the law, superseded the Heartbeat Law in August 2022, forcing every single abortion facility in Texas to close. I further stated that, if Texas (the second largest state in the country) could effectively become abortion-free, then Florida (the third largest state) could also certainly do so.

One of the most crucial moments of our meeting occurred when Trudy gave Speaker Renner documentation demonstrating that the vast majority of abortions in Florida (for the most recent 5-year period) were recorded as having taken place *before* 6-weeks' gestation, i.e. *before* a heartbeat in an unborn child is usually detectable. Trudy had Speaker Renner read aloud the aggregate number, which was over 265,000. As Speaker Renner did so, his voice trailed off. It was at this point I think Renner really understood that a Heartbeat Law would not end up protecting the vast majority of unborn children who are annually killed in Florida abortions.

Speaker Renner also heard from several of the other grassroots pro-life

advocates that were in attendance, including a sidewalk counselor as well as one of Florida Voice for the Unborn's board members, Keith Green of Manatee County, who shared their personal anecdotes.

At the meeting's conclusion, we presented Speaker Renner with a package containing an additional 147 postcards that had arrived in Florida Voice for the Unborn's mailbox after our November 22nd PRO-LIFE DAY OF ACTION. **We also had an additional surprise for the Speaker!**

Florida Voice for the Unborn had been advised to make back-up photo copies of the postcards collected prior to November 22nd in case something happened to the originals. We took that advice and had copies made of most of those postcards. **Therefore, at the end of our meeting, we were also able to give Speaker Renner paper copies containing roughly 2,256 of the original postcards we had collected prior to November 22nd.** That number represented the total we had collected prior to November 22nd and given to his office that day (1,627 postcards) as well as the estimated number of uncounted postcards that were in a second large bag also given to Renner's office on November 22nd (~629 postcards), which had been personally brought to the Capitol that day by the PRO-LIFE DAY OF ACTION attendees.

When the copies were made, they were not separated into piles "designated" for either Speaker Renner or Senate President Kathleen Passidomo. Therefore, at our February 20th meeting, Speaker Renner might have received copies of some postcards that Passidomo had already received, **but the overall effect was that by the end of the meeting Renner's office went from having zero postcards to having over 2,400 of them, including hundreds that were signed by residents in Palm Coast – his home district!** So, despite the Speaker's office "losing" the originals from November 22nd, our work was not in vain! And the entire episode granted us an unprecedented meeting with one of the most powerful people in state government – an individual whose upcoming decisions will impact hundreds of thousands of unborn children's lives. We were able to share the truth with Speaker Renner in a time and manner only the Lord could have designed from the very start! As always, Jesus we trust in You!

Following the meeting with Speaker Renner, our group of pro-life advocates stopped by Senate President Passidomo's office to deliver another 147 unique postcards to her, which also had arrived in Florida Voice for the Unborn's mailbox since November 22nd.





So, in total, we delivered 2,403 postcards to Passidomo's office and around 2,403 postcards to Speaker Renner's office – **for a grand total of ~4,806 postcards** – all of which were signed by Florida residents requesting our Legislature to immediately pass a law protecting all unborn children, from the moment of conception. Again, thank you to all who participated in this successful grassroots endeavor!

### **Our Road Map Going Forward**

We now know that, by the end of the upcoming 60-day Session, the Legislature is very likely to introduce legislation that will further protect our unborn brothers and sisters here in Florida. We do not know yet what that legislation will specifically entail, or if it will actually be enacted by *both* the House and Senate (and signed into law by the Governor). Nonetheless, Florida Voice for the Unborn will continue advocating in Tallahassee for full legislative protection, from the moment of conception.

**All 14 states that have become abortion-free since the end of *Roe v. Wade* are abortion-free because their legislature and their governor cooperated to make abortion illegal.** In other words, in each of those 14 states, the state legislature passed legislation prohibiting the killing of unborn children – legislation that was then signed into law by the governor of each of those states. This is what Florida can and must do! **Passing legislation is by far the most achievable option to secure an immediate end to the horrendous bloodshed in our state.**

Yes, past pro-life legislative battles in Tallahassee have been tough. But the end of *Roe v. Wade* changed the nature of the war. With the removal of our biggest impediment to reaching our goal, we must step on the gas like never before!

I created Florida Voice for the Unborn in January 2020 because I saw a real need for a serious statewide pro-life grassroots lobbying apparatus – one that was actually headquartered in Tallahassee and not in far flung corners of our state. As our record over the last three years thoroughly demonstrates, Florida Voice for the Unborn is here for the long haul – to not only lead the charge for the enactment of a law ending all Florida abortions in this post-*Roe v. Wade* era, but to also ensure that our unborn brothers' and sisters' interests are not discarded by our elected officials in future years.

Before I direct your attention to the “Grassroots Action Alert” at the end of this message, I wanted to give you a list of some of the proposed legislation that Florida Voice for the Unborn is either supporting, opposing, or monitoring during the upcoming Legislative Session:

- **Senate Bill 870 / House Bill 899 (Surrendered Newborn Infants, a.k.a. the “Baby Box Bill”).** After being sabotaged in the Senate during the closing days of the 2021 Legislative Session, the “Baby Box Bill” has returned this year – with new legislative sponsors in both the House and Senate! This lifesaving bill will amend Florida’s Safe Haven Law to explicitly permit the legal surrendering of a newborn infant via a safe, secure device that is physically attached to a hospital, emergency medical services station, or a fire station that is staffed 24 hours per day. In addition, the bill allows infants up to 30 days-old to be legally surrendered (currently the law only permits infants up to 7 days-old to be legally surrendered). Florida Voice for the Unborn continues to strongly support this legislation.
- **House Joint Resolution 129 (Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions).** This resolution, which would have to be approved by both chambers of the Legislature and then approved by 60% of Florida voters in the 2024 General Election, would amend the Florida Constitution so that after 2024 the addition of future Constitutional Amendments would need the approval of a supermajority of Florida voters (66.67%). The resolution has already passed its first House subcommittee. Florida Voice for the Unborn is currently monitoring the progress of this proposal.
- **Senate Bill 170 (Local Ordinances).** This legislation would, among other things, require local governments to suspend the enforcement of ordinances if legally challenged (under certain circumstances). There is



currently no House companion bill, but this legislation passed both of its Senate committees and is ready for a floor vote. Florida Voice for the Unborn is currently monitoring the progress of this legislation.

- **Senate Bill 1076 / House Bill 1033 (Legalize Abortion in Florida Up Until Birth).** This pro-abortion legislation, which Florida Voice for the Unborn of course adamantly opposes, has zero chance of being heard in any legislative committees. Yet, it is telling that pro-abortion Democrat legislators decided to file it any way.

### Early March 2023 Grassroots Action Alert

While the offices of Governor Ron DeSantis, Speaker Renner, and Senate President Passidomo continue to negotiate the terms of a bill further prohibiting abortion in Florida, we MUST continue to let each of those offices know that it is their duty to “Make Florida Totally Abortion Free!” Many of the talking points are contained above in this e-mail message, but here are two simplified ones:

- I am a grassroot supporters of Florida Voice for the Unborn. I respectfully request that Florida immediately enact a comprehensive law protecting all unborn children, from the moment of conception.
- I understand that the conservative-dominated Florida Supreme Court will be ruling on a legal challenge to our state’s 15-week abortion ban in the coming months. The Legislature need not wait until the Florida Supreme Court acts. **It can pass a so-called “trigger law” that will prohibit all abortions in Florida as soon as the Florida Supreme Court rules favorably in the case.** Florida’s preborn children cannot afford to wait any longer.

### Here are the key phone numbers:

**Governor DeSantis’ Executive Office:** 850-488-5603

**Chief of Staff James Uthmeier, Esq. & Executive Staff Director Taylor Schrader:** 850-717-9249

**Chief Policy Advisor Chris Spencer & Deputy Chief Policy Advisor Chris Pardo, Esq.:** 850-717-9506

**Director of Legislative Affairs Stephanie Kopelousos & Deputy Director of**

**Legislative Affairs Peter Cuderman, Esq.:** 850-717-9238

**House Speaker Renner's Office:** 850-717-5000 or 386-446-7644

**Senate President Passidomo's Office:** 850-487-5028 or 239-417-6205

**Here are the key e-mail addresses (with semicolons separating them):**

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[taylor.schrader@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:taylor.schrader@eog.myflorida.com), [chris.spencer@laspbs.state.fl.us](mailto:chris.spencer@laspbs.state.fl.us),  
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[peter.cuderman@laspbs.state.fl.us](mailto:peter.cuderman@laspbs.state.fl.us), [paul.renner@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:paul.renner@myfloridahouse.gov),  
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[mackintosh.andrew@flsenate.gov](mailto:mackintosh.andrew@flsenate.gov)

Based on whatever works best with your own e-mail account, please cut and paste the addresses above into your "to" header in a separate message. Don't forget to include a subject matter, such as "Pass Comprehensive Protections for the Unborn NOW!," and include the simple talking points above or any other points that you would like to communicate. Alternatively, you may click on each individual e-address above to send separate messages! If you'd like to, please feel free to Cc or Bcc my e-mail address when you send your message:  
[andrew@floridavoicefortheunborn.com](mailto:andrew@floridavoicefortheunborn.com)

For the sake of Florida's unborn children and their mothers, we have an obligation to keep up our relentless advocacy in Tallahassee! Thank you for your continued engagement!

P.S. Please check out my national television interview with conservative-leaning One America News. The interview was recorded prior to our meeting with Speaker Renner, but it aired afterward. You may find it [HERE!](#)

P.P.S. Students for Life of America (SFLA) will be hosting a small rally / lobby day at the Capitol this Tuesday, March 7th. The rally will feature SFLA's president Kristan Hawkins as the keynote speaker. I will also be speaking as well! The rally is currently scheduled to begin around 1:00 p.m. The exact rally location (somewhere at the Capitol) will be announced soon – and when it is, Florida Voice for the Unborn will advertise it on our social media channels. If you will be attending "Catholic Days at the Capitol" on March 7th, please plan to stop-by the rally before you head over to the nearby Civic Center.

P.P.P.S. Any financial contribution that you are able to make to Florida Voice for the Unborn during this extremely critical time would be much appreciated and put to immediate use! Please consider donating to Florida Voice for the Unborn via our secure website by [CLICKING HERE](#), or sending 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

As always, thank you for your generosity, which permits us to fight for our unborn brothers and sisters before those elected officials who have the power to save their lives. And don't forget to contact (and recontact!) each government official listed above today and in the days ahead! God bless you all for your faithfulness!

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, Parler, and YouTube @UnbornVoiceFL – and visit our website [HERE](#).



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