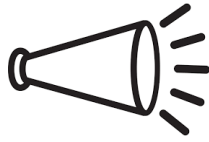


Florida Voice



For The Unborn

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Florida Voice for the Unborn Condemns the Chaos Caused Today by Pro-Abortion Activists at the House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing and Calls for an Investigation of Democratic Pro-Abortion Subcommittee Members Who Unsuccessfully Sought to Delay the Continued Advancement of Legislation Prohibiting Abortions in Florida After 15-Weeks Gestation

January 27, 2022

For Immediate Release

Contact: Andrew Shirvell, Founder and Executive Director, at (850) 404-3414 or Andrew@FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com.

Executive Director Andrew Shirvell today issued the following statement regarding the pandemonium surrounding Florida House Bill 5's second subcommittee stop:

“I was present for most of today’s scheduled meeting of the state House of Representatives’ Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee. The main agenda item was House Bill 5 (a.k.a. the 15-Week Abortion Ban). Unfortunately, near the end of the hearing, pro-abortion activists caused a major disruption by screaming and chanting – so much so that **Subcommittee Chair Rep. Bryan Avila (R–Miami-Dade County)** was forced to clear the entire room, which delayed the hearing by at least fifteen (15) minutes. After the hearing resumed, it was extended past its scheduled conclusion at 6:00 p.m. EST so that debate among subcommittee members could take place in full. Thankfully, the subcommittee voted 10-to-5 in favor of House Bill 5, with all pro-life Republicans in favor and all pro-abortion Democrats opposed. House Bill 5 will now head to its third and final hearing before the House Health and Human Services Committee.”

Shirvell continued, “As grateful as **Florida Voice for the Unborn** is for today’s victory, nonetheless what took place at the subcommittee hearing was completely unacceptable. The Republican-dominated subcommittee seemed to be playing defense – instead of going on offense. It began when vehemently pro-abortion **Rep. Carlos Smith (D–Orange County)** was permitted to offer a last-minute amendment to House Bill 5 that had nothing to do with the bill. The discussion surrounding Rep. Smith’s amendment, which was quickly defeated 10-to-5 (along party lines), was in reality nothing more than a bunch of unhinged rants from the pro-abortion Democratic subcommittee members about an act of peaceful pro-life civil disobedience at a

Planned Parenthood abortion facility in Lee County that had allegedly occurred earlier today. These pro-abortion Democratic subcommittee members, and in particular Rep. Smith, were allowed to go on at length and smear all pro-lifers as violent terrorists. Rep. Smith's last-minute amendment was totally inappropriate and outrageous."

Shirvell further remarked, "The subcommittee hearing then went downhill from there. During the portion of the hearing when public testimony was permitted, one pro-abortion activist after another testified, with only one pro-life advocate able to speak. Many pro-lifers, including myself, were there to testify but we never got a chance. I simply do not understand why the subcommittee chair did not alternate hearing from proponents and opponents. If the subcommittee chair believed that hearing mostly from House Bill 5's opponents would mollify them, then he was sadly mistaken. Instead, they erupted in anger when public testimony was cut short due to time constraints."

Shirvell continued, "From my personal observations, I believe some of the Democratic subcommittee members may have been complicit in the turmoil that ensued at today's subcommittee hearing. Accordingly, **Florida Voice for the Unborn** will be formally asking **House Speaker Chris Sprowls (R-Pinellas County)** to launch an investigation. Offending subcommittee members should be fully disciplined, i.e. censured and/or stripped of their subcommittee/committee assignments for the remainder of the 2022 Legislative Session."

Shirvell concluded, "If pro-life Republicans are going to get the 15-Week Abortion Ban enacted into law here in Florida, then they need to stop playing defense and go on offense. That is precisely why **Florida Voice for the Unborn** has proposed three amendments to House Bill 5, which will strengthen the legislation. These proposed amendments are 1) adding a provision that authorizes a political subdivision, such as a county or municipality, to regulate or prohibit abortion in a manner that is at least as stringent as state law; 2) replacing the terms 'fetus' and 'fetal' in the bill with the terms 'unborn child' and 'unborn child's' in order to properly acknowledge the humanity of children in the womb; and 3) removing the term 'medical abortion' from the bill and replacing it with the more commonly-accepted term 'chemical abortion,' since chemicals – not medicines – are what are contained within abortion pills administered during the first trimester. **Florida Voice for the Unborn** will continue to press for these much needed amendments to House Bill 5 as the bill continues on its legislative journey."

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 at FloridaVoiceForTheUnborn.com.