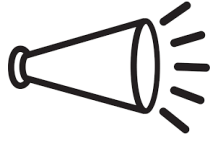


Florida Voice



For The Unborn

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Florida Voice for the Unborn Commends the Florida House of Representatives for Overwhelmingly Passing a Ban on Abortions in Florida After 15-Weeks Gestation

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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 Florida House Bill 5 (the 15-Week Abortion Ban):

“**Florida Voice for the Unborn** enthusiastically applauds the Florida House of Representatives for passing House Bill 5, which will end most Florida abortions after 15 weeks gestation. The vote came a few minutes after midnight today, February 17th, and was decisively in favor of this lifesaving legislation, with 78 representatives voting to approve the bill and 39 representatives voting against it. All House Republicans voted for House Bill 5, except for pro-abortion **Rep. Rene Plasencia (R—Brevard and Orange Counties)**, while all House Democrats voted in opposition, except for pro-life **Rep. James Bush III (D—Miami-Dade County)**. Significantly, two Republican representatives who had voted against the 2021 Disability Abortion Ban switched their votes and supported this year’s 15-Week Abortion Ban. These legislators are **Rep. Mike Caruso (R—Palm Beach County)** and **Rep. Sam Killebrew (R—Polk County)**. I believe their change of heart was due, in part, to the fact that **Florida Voice for the Unborn** publicly castigated them after their outrageous votes against the Disability Abortion Ban last April. **Florida Voice for the Unborn** was the only pro-life group to do so.”

Shirvell continued, “**Florida Voice for the Unborn** preferred to see the 2022 Florida Heartbeat Act (House Bill 167) passed during this year’s regular Legislative Session. Modeled after the highly-successful Texas Heartbeat Law, the Florida Heartbeat Act would have curbed the vast majority of abortions here in the Sunshine State by prohibiting an abortion on an unborn child whose heartbeat is detectable (which is right around 6 weeks gestation). Unfortunately, because House Bill 167 had no companion legislation in the state Senate, it did not receive a single committee hearing in the House.”

Shirvell further remarked, “Nonetheless, the 15-Week Abortion Ban is a step in the right direction and will annually save an estimated 5,000 unborn children from being murdered here in Florida

via brutal late-term abortions. That is why **Florida Voice for the Unborn** led the push for this lifesaving legislation when it became clear that no other pro-life bills would be able to pass during this year's regular Legislative Session. As executive director of **Florida Voice for the Unborn**, I testified in favor of House Bill 5 before its first subcommittee of reference (the House Professions and Public Health Subcommittee) on January 19th. **Florida Voice for the Unborn's** grassroots supporters throughout Florida repeatedly contacted House members to move House Bill 5 through the committee process, which included two other stops along the way before today's floor vote."

Shirvell continued, "**Florida Voice for the Unborn** expresses profound thanks to tireless pro-life champion **Rep. Erin Grall (R—Indian River and St. Lucie Counties)** for sponsoring the 15-Week Abortion Ban in the House. On February 15th, an extensive question and answer period concerning House Bill 5 took place on the House floor. Rep. Grall provided excellent answers, demolishing the pro-abortion representatives' unfounded objections. Also, on February 15th, fourteen pro-abortion floor amendments to the bill were heard and debated. Thankfully, all of them were overwhelmingly voted down, including amendments that would have permitted abortions after 15 weeks gestation if the children targeted in such abortions were conceived as a result of rape, incest, or an unfortunate human trafficking situation."

Shirvell concluded, "Prior to the midnight vote, representatives debated House Bill 5 for more than five hours yesterday evening. As executive director of **Florida Voice for the Unborn**, I sat in the House gallery, and was present for the entire debate and final vote. Many pro-life representatives rose in passionate support of the bill, which was highly encouraging. A few pro-abortion activists started chanting and screaming from the House gallery just prior to the final vote in a futile attempt to stop it, but they were quickly ejected from the building. House Bill 5's companion legislation, Senate Bill 146, still must be heard in one final committee before the full Senate can vote on the legislation. Thus, there are further opportunities for this legislation to be strengthened before it becomes final law. To that end, **Florida Voice for the Unborn** will continue to press for three needed amendments to the 15-Week Abortion Ban. 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** remains optimistic that one or more of these much needed amendments will be added to the Senate version and incorporated into the final law."

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.