

## **Petition Drive Ends December 12 (see p. 3)** **A Frontal Assault on Our Pro-Life Law!**

On October 29, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced that her like-minded pro-choice lawmakers would soon introduce the Reproductive Health Act. If passed, this Act would repeal the mandatory 24-hour waiting period, informed consent, parental consent for minors, and other abortion restrictions that have been enacted during the last thirty years by the state's pro-life majorities in both House and Senate. But more importantly, it would repeal Michigan's 1846 law that banned abortion throughout pregnancy except to save the life of the mother. That law was reaffirmed in a newer 1931 law. But everything stayed the same. Yet, Michigan's very restrictive pro-life law has been sidelined since 1973, not enforceable because of the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

The good news...and it is GOOD NEWS...the Reproductive Health Act is dead on arrival in the state legislature. Pro-lifers still maintain slight majorities in both chambers so the bill is going nowhere. The bad news...and this is BAD NEWS...if we lose those few House and Senate seats in the November, 2020 election, then the governor and her allies can revisit the issue in 2021. Fortunately, several of the restrictions were enacted through statewide referendums that require a two-thirds majority to pass. The likelihood of that happening is practically ZERO.

Why is Whitmer doing this now when Governor Granholm never tried it? The answer is simple. Donald Trump is one Supreme Court justice away from securing a strong five vote conservative majority. True, we already have a five vote majority, but court observers believe that Chief Justice John Roberts may be reluctant to make sweeping decisions that might upset the status quo. Clearly, overturning *Roe* would do just that. So, we might need another conservative voice on the high court. Because of this situation and the fear that *Roe* might be reversed, several states, including New York, enacted new laws protecting their pro-choice statutes. If the court overturns *Roe* and sends the issue back to the states Governor Whitmer wants to make sure that abortion remains legal. But she needs a new law to replace our current (but not enforceable) law.

Michigan's pro-life law is an old one. In 1846 the capital was still Detroit and the state's population was only 350,000. One may argue that a bill enacted in the 1840s no longer represents the will of the people in 2019 when we now have 10 million residents. That's a valid point. However, Michigan has always been in the forefront in protecting and defending life. Michigan became not only the first state in the nation to ban capital punishment but was the first English-speaking governmental entity to do so in the world. That was also in 1846. And the last legal execution in the state took place in Detroit in 1830 when the city (village) had only 2,200 people. Have Michigan's voters maintained their pro-life convictions? Let's look at the evidence. The 1846 ban on abortion was reaffirmed by the legislature in 1931. In 1972 Michigan voters rejected by 61 percent a state referendum that would have legalized abortion through the fifth month of pregnancy. In 1988 voters approved a referendum that prohibited state funding for abortions. The pro-life vote was 59 percent. To say that the pro-life sentiment of 1846 cannot be used to justify our current situation is absurd. We have been and remain pro-life!

Michigan Values Life, the broad-based coalition that launched a petition drive to end dismemberment abortions announced that it will end the petition drive on December 12. The goal has been to collect 400,000 signatures. The second phase of the process will be conducted by the state Board of Canvassers that will review the signatures. Once that process is completed (probably in January or February), the bill will be introduced in the Michigan Legislature. If passed by simple majorities it becomes law and our pro-choice governor cannot veto it. If anyone has still not signed the petition, you have just a few days to act. Call our office at 269-372-8123 or Rob Karrer at 269-599-4954.

## Pro-Life News Round-Up

### Pro-Life Journalist David Daleiden Loses Court Case

David Daleiden and Sandra Merritt, the two individuals associated with the Center for Medical Progress, the group that recorded and produced under-cover videos of Planned Parenthood staff talking about selling fetal body parts in 2015, lost their court case on November 19 before a federal judge in San Francisco.

*The following article is from Life News.com*

Liberty Counsel will appeal the verdict in the multimillion-dollar civil lawsuit against Sandra Merritt for her undercover investigation of Planned Parenthood's trafficking of human baby body parts. From the beginning, the court severely restricted the evidence, and at the end gave instructions to the jury that instructed them how they should rule on critical issues. The jury decided in favor of the abortion giant on each count, including RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations), and awarded more than \$2 million in damages.

The case was heard by U.S. District Court Judge William Orrick, who is the founder of the Good Samaritan Family Resource Center that houses the Planned Parenthood of Northern California facility. In 2017, the defense requested that Orrick recuse himself from the case and he refused.

Merritt and colleague David Daleiden, the founder of Center for Medical Progress produced videos in 2015 exposing PP's illegal trade in aborted baby body parts after a 30-month undercover operation. The videos showed top-level PP executives haggling over prices of aborted baby body parts and discussing how they change abortion procedures to obtain more intact organs.

However, throughout the six-week trial, Judge Orrick specifically influenced the way the jury considered the issues and blocked them from watching the recorded conversations on the

undercover videos. Orrick told jurors they couldn't look at this as a First Amendment case, where freedom of speech and the press could be considered as a defense. However, Merritt and Daleiden acted according to the parameters of California recording law and no other citizen journalist or journalism organization has ever been charged with a crime for undercover recordings made in the public interest.

After the verdict, Liberty Counsel stated, "There are numerous legal errors that render the jury verdict flawed and unjust. We will appeal this decision and seek a new trial in front of a different judge. Ms. Merritt has yet to have her day in court, and we are confident that when she does, she will prevail."

### Supreme Court to Hear Louisiana Case

On October 4 the U.S. Supreme Court announced that it will hear arguments in a case emanating from Louisiana. In 2018 the state passed a bill that required doctors who performed abortions to have admitting privileges in local hospitals. The law is identical to a Texas statute passed in 2013 and struck down by the Supreme Court in 2016 in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*. Much has changed on the court since then. Neil Gorsuch filled the vacancy created by the death of conservative icon Antonin Scalia. In 2019 Justice Anthony Kennedy retired and was replaced by Brett Kavanaugh. The stakes are much higher now because Kennedy was perceived as the swing vote, sometimes voting with the liberal bloc on some abortion-related cases. He voted with the majority in *Whole Woman's Health*. Now Justice Kavanaugh may be inclined to vote differently. Earlier in the year the court voted five to four to temporarily block the bill from taking effect. The deciding vote came from Chief Justice Roberts. But as National Public Radio's Nina Totenberg commented, "The 5-4 vote amounted only to a pause to preserve the status quo." The very fact that the court is revisiting the issue having already decided it six years ago leads one to conclude that the justices are not only willing to take another look at the issue but possibly change course. Back in 2013 the court ruled that the Texas law was unconstitutional and

imposed an “undue burden” on women seeking access to abortion. What has changed in the last six years? There is only one answer: Brett Kavanaugh. We shall see when the court hears the case and makes its final decision in 2020.

### **Alabama’s Pro-Life Law Blocked by Federal Judge**

In May 2019 the State of Alabama passed the most restrictive pro-life law in the nation. It would prohibit all abortions--even in case of rape and incest--and make it a felony for a doctor to perform one unless to save the life of the mother. On October 29 a federal judge temporarily blocked the bill from taking effect. Since it was passed with the expressed purpose of bringing a direct challenge to *Roe v. Wade*, pro-lifers are guardedly optimistic that a more conservative Supreme Court will take a new look at *Roe*.

### **Conscience Clause Struck Down by Federal Judge**

On November 6, a federal judge struck down a Department of Health and Human Services rule that would have allowed doctors and other health employees to refuse certain care if it violated their religious convictions. The Department claimed that the rule would have given affected health care workers the right to opt out of providing services like abortion if it violated their conscience all in the name of religious freedom. Groups like Planned Parenthood complained that the rule to refuse health care was tantamount to discrimination. On November 20 another federal judge in San Francisco issued another ruling, striking down the Trump administration’s rule regarding conscience clause protections for health care workers’ religious rights. Conscience clause legislation was approved by Congress in the mid-1970s. Unfortunately, activist judges have imposed their own interpretations when it comes to health care and the right of doctors or nurses to refuse to participate in abortion. These are examples of judicial interference, over-reach, and hostility to people of faith.

## **Thank You**

A big Thank You to everyone who donated to KRTL to help defray the cost of producing our 50th anniversary booklet that will be printed this winter. Look for more details. Anyone wishing to make a donation can send a check to our office at 4200 W. Michigan Ave., Suite 10, Kalamazoo, MI 49006.

## **Petition Drive Nearing End**

Michigan Values Life, the broad-based coalition that began a petition drive back in late June to collect some 400,000 signatures, will soon hand over its thousands of petition forms to the state Board of Canvassers. Once that process is completed (probably in January or February), the bill will be reintroduced to the Michigan Legislature. If passed by simple majorities it becomes law and our pro-choice governor cannot veto it.



*Merry Christmas*  
from the  
Kalamazoo Right to Life Board

## President's Corner

Rob Karrer

I saw the movie "Harriet" the second week of November. It traces the life of Harriet Tubman, the black slave who ran away from her Maryland owner in 1849 and joined the Underground Railroad in Philadelphia. Over the next few years she helped rescue many other slaves and take them to freedom in the North. No spoilers here, just a strong recommendation to see the film. Toward the end Harriet passionately tells her "former" slaveowner, "People don't own people."

Since I have always compared slavery to abortion, I think that we can all say will equal conviction, "People don't kill babies." It's as simple as that. Are there problems in some pregnancies? Yes. Is carrying a rapist's child a horrible and painful experience? Yes. Is there something wrong when a 13-year old gets pregnant? Most definitely. Are there crises pregnancies which can produce fear and despair? Yes. There are complex situations and not all of life fits into nice, neat solutions. Yet, I go back to Harriet's declaration, "People don't own people." Do we treat people like cattle, taking away their humanity? Before the Civil War slaves were considered property to be bought and sold. To slave owners they were merely tools of production, field hands to be abused just to profit the owner. They may have been considered human but were deemed inferior. Remember, in our original Constitution slaves were counted as only three-fifths of a person when counting for the census. So much for the Declaration of Independence's charge that "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." Yet were they not made in the image of God?

Despite what the pro-choice movement announces ad nauseam--that anti-abortion laws deny women the right to control their own bodies--let's review that science says. The unborn baby, while drawing its nourishment from the mother, is not the mother. Neither is it the property of the mother that could be discarded and thrown into the trash. No. The unborn baby has all the unique features that makes it a new member of the human family from conception. The baby's distinct finger-prints, and brainwaves, and DNA are unrepeatable.

People don't kill babies. Here in the 21st century, after nearly fifty years of legal abortion and the deaths of over 60 million innocent aborted babies, it still seems incomprehensible that we Americans can still look the other way.

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