

House Committee Advances Women's Right to Know Act

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The Pennsylvania House Health Committee voted on Monday to advance the Women's Right to Know Act (House Bill 1077), which would offer a pregnant woman the option to see a fetus's heartbeat prior to an abortion. The bill passed with support from both Republicans and Democrats on the committee.



"This legislation will empower women by giving them a high-tech tool that will provide them with information that represents a victory for women, and a victory for patient rights," Gallagher added. "Before a woman really goes on in her pregnancy," said Maria Vitale Gallagher, legislative director for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, the former research arm of Planned Parenthood, 19 states have passed legislation simply follows a growing trend among the states to make as much information as possible available to women.

"Women have a right to all relevant information about their pregnancies. With this additional information, women can make informed decisions for themselves and their families," said Gallagher.

Some abortion advocates in Pennsylvania have objected to the bill on the grounds that it "forces a woman to see the face of the unborn child in order to determine the method of abortion. The Women's Right to Know Act ensures that the ultrasound image is made available to the woman in a private setting where she can view it.

Abortion advocates have even admitted House Bill 1077 does not force a woman to undergo an ultrasound against her will. Ultrasounds are already done in many cases. Suellen Craig, the CEO and president of Planned Parenthood of Central Pennsylvania, told the *York Dispatch*.

In the same article published in the *York Dispatch* on 2/3/12, State Representative Eugene DePasquale (D), who is also a Planned Parenthood official, said that the bill "forces a woman to see the face of the unborn child regardless of whether they want it." The expression, "Knowledge is power" comes to mind when discussing this issue. There is no doubt that this constitutes a burdensome imposition. Offering a woman information relevant to the grave decision she is about to make is empowering and essential for her.

When a pregnant woman enters an abortion facility, she does so in a state of vulnerability. She is scared and often feels trapped by her circumstances, whether by medical workers or even forced upon her by a boyfriend or by her family and she has come to believe it is the only way out. In her state of stress and anxiety, it is difficult for her to provide much-needed clarity. The decision she is about to make is irrevocable. She will live with the consequences for the rest of her life. For many women, leaving them to suffer physical and psychological problems.

Many post-abortive women say that if they had known all the facts, including information about the development of their unborn child, they would have chosen to continue the pregnancy to ensure they have all the facts.

The prime sponsor of the Women's Right to Know Act, State Representative Kathy Rapp (R) said, "As a woman, I believe when a woman makes a crucial decision, she should have all the facts available to her."