

Life Matters

The Newsletter of the St. Rose of Lima Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee

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A Special Focus

By: Fred Dwyer

This issue of Life Matters, as all previous issues, is intended to provide information which may help its readers in their efforts to promote here, and throughout our nation, an uncompromising respect for life, and for sound family values. For too long the culture of death (abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide) has grown and flourished under our government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." How did this happen, it's our government, we are "the people?" Better yet, how can "we the people" reestablish that uncompromising respect for life? Prayer can certainly help, but we are also called by the Church, and hopefully our own conscience, to "Faithful Citizenship," to political responsibility. Therefore, since this is a National election year, this issue of Life Matters focuses on political information, information which we all need to be informed voters.

Have We Really Made Any Progress?

Excerpted from: A Great Day for Unborn Children
Let's Make it a Great Year!

From the National Right to Life (NRL)
President, Wanda Franz, Ph.D.

Written by Father Dennis Day NRL Treasurer
<http://www.nrlc.org/>

On April 1st, [2004] I was privileged to attend the President's signing of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act in the East Room of the White House. After all the work we've done over the years, it was obviously a highlight moment, not only for me personally but for the entire pro-life movement.

When the President came by he reached back into the second row to shake my hand. "Thanks for coming," he said. You could see in his eyes that this President means it; he is truly appreciative of the work pro-lifers do.

I've been an officer of National Right to Life for many years now, and a board member for even longer, since 1981. In that time I've seen great progress in our movement. But there have been

St. Rose Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee Officers

Editor of Life Matters – Fred Dwyer

Chairperson – Peter Cloonan

Secretary – Mariotte Corson

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Spiritual Director - Fr. John Inserra

losses, too. Children born when I became a board member in 1981 are now adults. In fact, they are survivors of a generation whose annual abortion numbers exceeded 1.6 million.

Now the tide is turning the other way. There are 300,000 fewer abortions each year. Polls show that America is once again a pro-life nation, and this includes its young people. Thanks to the efforts of National Right to Life over the years, and the day-in, day-out work of our grassroots members, we have changed the nation. Twenty years ago, almost all polls showed a majority of Americans supported legal abortion. No more.

Back then it was almost impossible to pass free-standing strong pro-life legislation. Now we can. The world is changing, and it's because of you.

The great task of saving unborn lives and changing America's hearts is something that has been given to our generation. If we don't do it, who will?

The Presidential Record on Life President George W. Bush 2001-Present

From: The National Right to Life Committee

"The promises of our Declaration of Independence are not just for the strong, the independent, or the healthy. They are for everyone -- including unborn children. We are a society with enough compassion and wealth and love to care for both mothers and their children, to see the promise and potential in every human life." President George W. Bush

During his first week in office, President Bush reinstated the Mexico City Policy, which prevents tax funds from being given to organizations that perform and promote abortion overseas. He threatened to veto an appropriations bill unless a provision overturning the policy was removed.

President Bush declared that federal funds will not be used for stem cell research that would require the

destruction of human embryos. His threat of a veto stopped an attempt in the U.S. Senate to provide funding for such research.

President Bush has stopped many anti-life initiatives by threatening vetoes – including proposals to allow abortion to be covered in federal employees’ health insurance plans, and allow abortions to be performed in U.S. military medical facilities and within the federal prison system.

The Bush Administration ruled that federally controlled substances cannot be used to assist suicides. When the decision was overturned in federal district court, the Administration appealed the case.

President Bush has strongly backed a U.S. ban on human cloning and helped defeat a “clone and kill” proposal in 2001.

President Bush has helped win U.S. House approval of pro-life measures including the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, the Child Custody Protection Act, and the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act.

President Bush promoted and signed the Born Alive Infants Protection Act, which protects all infants born alive, including those who survive abortion.

The Bush Administration’s representatives to the United Nations and to UN meetings and conferences have fought repeated efforts to establish an international “right” to abortion.

The Bush Administration has instituted rule changes to permit states to make unborn children and their mothers eligible for prenatal coverage under the federal-state health insurance program for poor children.

President Bush promoted and signed the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, which bans the use of the gruesome partial-birth abortion procedure.

Let Us Remember As We Say Farewell The Reagan Presidential Record on Life

From: The National Right to Life Committee

*“My administration is dedicated to the preservation of America as a free land, and there is no cause more important for preserving that freedom than affirming the transcendent right to life of all human beings, the right without which no other rights have meaning.”
President Ronald Reagan*

President Reagan supported legislation to challenge Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion on demand.

President Reagan adopted the “Mexico City Policy,” which cut off U.S. foreign aid funds to private organizations that performed and promoted abortion overseas.

The Reagan Administration cut off funding to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) because that agency violated U.S. law by participating in China’s compulsory abortion program.

The Reagan Administration adopted regulations to prohibit federally funded “family planning” clinics from promoting abortion as a method of birth control.

The Reagan Administration blocked the use of federal funds for research using tissue from aborted babies.

The Reagan Administration helped win enactment of the Danforth Amendment which established that federally funded education institutions are not guilty of “sex discrimination” if they refuse to pay for abortions.

President Reagan introduced the topic of fetal pain into public debate.

The Reagan Administration played a key role in enactment of legislation to protect the right to life of handicapped newborns and signed the legislation into law.

President Reagan designated a National Sanctity of Human Life Day in recognition of the value of human life at all stages.

President Reagan wrote a book entitled *Abortion and the Conscience of a Nation*, in which he made the case against legal abortion and in favor of overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Pro-Life Theology

Fr. John Inserra

All human life comes from God, is sustained in existence by God, and therefore should never be terminated by anyone but God. By the fact that Jesus Christ, the Son of God died for everyone, not just a few and not just for those who have been born, all human life belongs to God – born or unborn. Thus no one can say, especially those who have been baptized, “It is my body. I can do whatever I want with it.” We are merely renting these bodies that God has given us, and God expects them to be treated in the way He designed them to be treated.

John F. Kerry and Pro-Life Issues

From: The John Kerry web site.

Note: Items enclosed in brackets [] are editorial comment

John Kerry believes that women have the right to control their own bodies, their own lives, and their own destinies. He believes that the Constitution protects their right to choose [abortion] and to make their own decisions in consultation with their doctor, their conscience, and their God. He will defend this right as President. He recently announced he will support only pro-choice [pro-abortion] judges to the Supreme Court. Kerry also believes that we should promote family planning and health plans should assure women contraceptive coverage.

Pro-Life Issue Voting Records of John Kerry & Christopher Dodd

Senator Christopher Dodd is running for reelection this year.

Result	Name of Legislation	Kerry	Dodd	ProLife
Passed	Unborn Victims of Violence Act: passage 03/25/2004	N	N	Y
Rejected	Feinstein Substitute Amendment (single-victim substitute) 03/25/2004	Y	Y	N
Agreed To	Medicare Modernization Act: passage 11/25/2003	NV	N	Y
Agreed To	Medicare Modernization Act: critical procedural vote 11/24/2003	N	N	Y
Passed	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003 10/21/2003	N	N	Y
[Agreed To]	[Retain ban on] funding of overseas pro-abortion organizations 07/09/2003	NV	N	Y
Rejected	Abortion in military medical facilities 05/22/2003	NV	Y	N
Passed	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003: passage 03/13/2003	NV	N	Y
Rejected	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act: Feinstein Substitute 03/12/2003	NV	Y	N
Agreed To	Harkin Amendment to endorse Roe v. Wade 03/12/2003	Y	Y	N
Rejected	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act: Boxer Motion 03/12/2003	NV	Y	N
Rejected	[Repeal] ban on abortions in military medical facilities 06/21/2002	Y	Y	N
Passed	Shays-Meehan (McCain-Feingold) "campaign finance reform" 03/20/2002	Y	Y	N
[Rejected]	[Repeal] ban on abortions in military medical facilities 06/20/2000	Y	Y	N
Passed	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act 10/21/1999	N	N	Y
Rejected	[Reporting requirements for distribution of] baby body parts ("fetal tissue") 10/21/1999	N	N	Y
Agreed To	Roe v. Wade endorsement 10/21/1999	Y	Y	N
Failed	killing Roe v. Wade endorsement 10/21/1999	N	N	Y
Rejected	McCain-Feingold "campaign finance reform" 10/19/1999	Y	Y	N
Rejected	Shays-Meehan "campaign finance reform" 10/19/1999	Y	Y	N
[Rejected]	[table] ban on federal employees' abortion coverage 07/01/1999	Y	Y	N
Agreed To	Ban on abortions in military medical facilities 05/26/1999	N	N	Y
Rejected	Child Custody Protection Act -- Cloture Vote 09/22/1998	N	N	Y
Failed	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban--Veto Override 09/18/1998	N	N	Y
Rejected	Abortions in military medical facilities 06/25/1998	Y	Y	N
Agreed To	State Department authorization bill 04/28/1998	N	N	Y
Agreed To	Medicare: right to purchase unrationed insurance 04/01/1998	*	N	Y
Rejected	[table] McCain-Feingold "campaign finance reform" 02/25/1998	N	N	Y
Rejected	McCain-Feingold "campaign finance reform" -- Cloture Vote 10/08/1997	Y	Y	N
Agreed To	[Continue ban on] Federal employees' abortion coverage 07/22/1997	N	N	Y
Rejected	Abortions in military medical facilities 07/10/1997	Y	Y	N
Rejected	Abortion coverage in S-CHIP ("kid care") 06/25/1997	Y	Y	N
Agreed To	Medicare: right to purchase unrationed insurance 06/25/1997	N	N	Y
Passed	Partial-Birth Abortion Ban 05/20/1997	N	N	Y
Passed	Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act 04/16/1997	Y	Y	Y
Agreed To	Clinton unrestricted funding for "population assistance" 02/25/1997	Y	Y	N

Y = Yea

N = Nay

NV = No Vote

*** = Ineligible to Vote**

The voting records charted above are as reported on the web site of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC). The determination of the Pro-Life position on each of these items is that of the NRLC. Your editor (admittedly not a political expert) has reviewed each of these, and believes the NRLC positions to be clearly in accord with the pro-life philosophy.

Within the chart, text in brackets [] is editorial clarification.

“Partial-Birth Abortion Ban”

What’s happened in San Francisco?

From: The National Right to Life Committee’s Today’s News & Views, of June 02, 2004

By: Dave Andrusko daveandrusko@hotmail.com

Parroting the PFFA Line

As expected a federal judge appointed by former President Clinton struck down the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act signed into law last November by President Bush. Handed down June 1, Judge Phyllis Hamilton’s decision specifically prohibits the Justice Department from enforcing the ban, enacted with widespread bi-partisan support in Congress, at any of Planned Parenthood’s 900 clinics. Hamilton’s 117-page decision followed a three-week trial in March and April.

The act is under challenge in two other federal courts in Nebraska and New York. Decisions in these cases are expected this summer.

Criticism of the decision was swift. "The president strongly disagrees with today's California court ruling, which overturns the overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress that voted to pass this important legislation," the president's press secretary, Scott McClellan, said. "The president is committed to building a culture of life in America, and the administration will take every necessary step to defend this law in the courts."

Ohio Rep. Steve Chabot, a House sponsor of the ban, said Hamilton’s decision was "a seriously flawed decision by a lone federal judge in San Francisco." The law, Chabot said, "is sound, constitutional legislation."

Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.) called the ruling "a travesty." Hamilton "is a very liberal judge," he added, noting, "This is a classic example of how judges impose their philosophies on judicial proceedings. . . . She clearly had prejudged this case."

Monica Goodling, a spokeswoman for the Justice Department, said in a statement, "The Justice Department vigorously litigated this case, as well as the pending cases in Nebraska and New York involving challenges to the law banning partial-birth abortions." The Department, she added, "will continue to devote all resources necessary to defend this Act of Congress, which President Bush has said

'will end an abhorrent practice and continue to build a culture of life in America.' "

NRLC, which vigorously supported the ban, pointed out that the decision was hardly unexpected.

"Judge Hamilton's deep personal hostility to the law has been evident throughout the judicial proceedings, and is evident in many passages in her 117-page injunction," said NRLC Legislative Director Douglas Johnson. "Other district and appellate judges also will be heard from during the months ahead."

Johnson added, "It is the U.S. Supreme Court that will ultimately decide whether our elected representatives can ban the practice of mostly delivering a living premature infant and then puncturing her skull. A one-vote shift on the Supreme Court would allow the ban on partial-birth abortions to be upheld."

Planned Parenthood and a local affiliate brought the California case. Subsequently, they were joined as plaintiffs by the city and county of San Francisco.

As the Washington Post explained in its story, "Hamilton adopted most of the arguments put forward by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America in finding that the measure was too vague, that it placed an unfair burden on women seeking certain kinds of abortions and that it did not do enough to protect women's health."

Although Congress justified the ban in part [on] its finding that the **partial-birth abortion method would cause excruciating pain to the partly born infant, Judge Hamilton dismissed this factor as "irrelevant," saying that even if it is true it also would apply to dismemberment of the fetus at the same stages.**

On May 20, Senator Sam Brownback (R-Ks.) and Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ) introduced the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act.

This bill would require that abortion[ists] provide women, seeking any type of abortion past 20 weeks, with certain information regarding the capacity of their unborn children to experience pain and regarding the availability of pain-reducing drugs. (see next page for further information regarding the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act).

The Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act

From: The National Right to Life Committee web site

On May 20, 2004, Senator Sam Brownback (R-Ks.) and Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), with the strong backing of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), introduced a major new pro-life initiative, the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act (S. 2466, H.R. 4420).

"There are numerous laws to prevent cruelty to domestic and wild animals, but no law to prevent well-developed unborn children from suffering excruciating pain as they are torn limb from limb or crushed during abortions," said NRLC Legislative Director Douglas Johnson, who joined Brownback and Smith at a press conference in the U.S. Capitol announcing the introduction of the bill. Statements endorsing the bill were also issued by the Family Research Council, Christian Medical Association, Southern Baptist Convention (Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission), and U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

This bill would require every abortionist to provide, whenever a woman seeks an abortion past 20 weeks after fertilization, specified information about the capacity of her unborn child to experience pain during the abortion, after which the woman must either accept or refuse (by signing a form) the administration of pain-reducing drugs directly to the unborn child. The bill would apply to all abortions past 20 weeks, regardless of the method used.

The pain caused by the partial-birth method has been the subject of testimony during the ongoing trial before a federal judge in New York regarding the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. The Associated Press dispatch reported on April 7:

"A type of abortion banned under a new federal law would cause 'severe and excruciating' pain to 20-week-old fetuses, a medical expert testified yesterday ... 'I believe the fetus is conscious,' said Dr. Kanwaljeet 'Sonny' Anand, a pediatrician at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. ... Anand said yesterday that fetuses show increased heart rate, blood flow, and hormone levels in response to pain. 'The physiological responses have been very clearly studied,' he said. 'The fetus cannot talk ... so this is the best evidence we can get.'"

The Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act contains a number of proposed congressional "findings" regarding the scientific evidence that unborn

children would experience great pain during abortions at 20 weeks (and perhaps earlier). The findings also cite a number of existing federal laws that seek to diminish the suffering even of animals, such as restrictions on how livestock can be slaughtered and restrictions on the use of animals in medical research.

In a Zogby poll conducted in April, the public supported "laws requiring that women who are 20 weeks or more along in their pregnancy be given information about fetal pain before having an abortion" by a 77-16 percent margin.

An Opportunity For You to Act

Editor's suggestion

Take a marker, highlight this paragraph, put it onto the center of your desk. As soon as you have 5 minutes, sit down and write to your Senators, and your Representative (addresses below). Tell your Senators that you are in favor of the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, S. 2466, and ask them to vote for it. Tell your Representative that you are in favor of the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, H.R. 4420, and ask her/him to vote for it. Imagine the agony experienced by these tiny victims of abortion. Please do something about it.

The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd
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Washington, D.C. 20510-0702

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
United States Senate
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The Honorable Nancy L. Johnson
United States House of Representatives
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
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The Honorable Christopher Shays
United States House of Representatives
1126 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515-0704

Nancy Johnson represents District 5 which includes most, if not all, Newtown readers of this newsletter.

Christopher Shays represents District 4 and is included here primarily for readers from surrounding towns

Are You Registered to Vote?

For the vast majority, I expect the answer is "yes," but if this reminder moves a single additional person to register, it's clearly worth this space and ink. The deadline for registering to vote in Connecticut is **August 9, 2004** for the Primary Election. The deadline for registering to vote in the General Election is **October 19, 2004**.

Who is eligible to register? To register in Connecticut you must: be a citizen of the United States; be a resident of Connecticut and of the town in which you wish to vote; **be 17 years old**. You can vote when you turn 18; have completed confinement and parole if previously convicted of a felony, and have had your voting rights restored by Registrars of Voters; not currently be declared mentally incompetent to vote by a court of law.

There are voter registration cards available at all three Church entrances. Pick up one, fill it out, and mail it. That's all there is to the process. If you would prefer, you can register via the Internet. Go to <http://www.nrlc.org/> click on the large "Register to Vote" button halfway down the page on the left edge. Identify your state on the next page and follow directions.

Another Victory

Congress Bans Patents on Human Embryos

Excerpted from NRLC Web Site

WASHINGTON (February 4, 2004) – For the first time ever, Congress has enacted a prohibition on the patenting of human embryos.

The new law, known as the Weldon Amendment, went into effect on January 23.

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) played a key role in lobbying in support of the legislation, which will make it more difficult for biotech firms to profit from their ongoing attempts to create human embryos by cloning.

The powerful Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) led an unsuccessful four-month lobbying and propaganda campaign against the proposal, but these attacks ultimately failed because of strong support for the Weldon Amendment from the House and Senate Republican leadership, and from the Bush Administration.

"Enactment of the Weldon Amendment is not a cure-all, but it may serve as an important bulwark against some of the darker trends in contemporary

biotechnology research," commented NRLC Legislative Director Douglas Johnson. "The Weldon Amendment stands for the principle that human life is not a commodity, and that a member of the human family can never be regarded as a mere invention."

The ban was sponsored by Congressman Dave Weldon (R-Fl.). Weldon is a physician who, along with Senator Sam Brownback (R-Ks.), has led efforts to ban human cloning in the United States.

The Weldon-Stupak bill [another bill] to ban human cloning has passed the House of Representatives twice (in 2001 and 2003), but it does not yet have the level of support needed to pass the Senate.

Since the ban on human cloning has not been enacted, some biotech firms continue to work to overcome technical obstacles and create human embryos by cloning, for the purpose of using them in research that will kill them. Such "research cloning" is sometimes referred to by the misnomer "therapeutic cloning."

Researchers plan to profit from human cloning in several ways. Some researchers hope to create cloned human embryos with specific genetic traits, patent them, and then collect royalties each time researchers use a "copy" of the patented embryo.

A patent is a government-conferred property right that gives an inventor exclusive rights to manufacture or use his invention for a defined period, usually 20 years. The patent holder can license others to employ his patent for a fee, called a royalty.

"Unethical researchers and biotechnology companies are willing not only to create and destroy embryonic human beings for research purposes, but even to patent these fellow humans so they can license, market, buy, and sell them as mere commodities," noted Richard Doerflinger, an expert on the issue of human cloning with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. "By prohibiting patents on human organisms, Congress has helped prevent such gross abuses and has taken some of the profit motive out of the drive for human cloning."

Alta Charo, a professor at the University of Wisconsin who is a prominent supporter of research cloning, was unhappy about enactment of the Weldon Amendment. She told a reporter for the *Badger Herald* that lack of patentability would make investors less willing to put money into such research.

"Investors hope for a return on their original investment with the basic research, but with no patent, there is no return," Charo explained.