

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Valuing the Living

Many pro-life advocates filled the halls of the capitol this week. They filled the mailboxes with red roses, held ceremonies in the rotunda, and spoke with their legislatures about the issues important to them, human life.

In Missouri there were 12,476 unborn children aborted in 2003. The question still remains in families, communities and politics--when does life begin?

To answer that question we will take a look at the growth of a baby inside the mother.

- A heart beats after 21 days of conception.
- Within the first four weeks of conception the nervous system is communicating with his primitive muscles.
- During week five the facial features are visible and the baby has its own blood type.
- By week nine all the major organs have formed.
- The last week of the first trimester the brain is fully formed and the baby begins to cry within the womb.
- At week 21 the baby can live outside the womb with hospitalization.

The next question most people have is what happens if the life of the mother is endangered? According to the Department of Health in between 1998-2002 in Missouri 26,601 abortions of 62,159 abortions preformed were repeat abortions. That is a 42.8 percent repeat rate. It is unknown how many abortions are preformed for medical reasons.

A person has to remember what the life could have been. The life that was terminated early could have been the person who found a cure to Alzheimer's or cancer, been our next governor, or the smiling face that lights up a room as he/she works diligently in our community.

There are several pieces of legislation that question where the life begins. The Missouri Legislature will be taking a look at cloning and embryonic stem-cell research. We will address both issues in the weekly report as session continues.

If you have any questions about this issue or any other issues please feel free to contact the office toll free at 866-768-3987 or by email bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

*Statistics come from Missouri Department of Health